













Biography.  
Au- Kusto Das Pal  
1878

*Gan.*  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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It is not my purpose to write a biography. "A record of the life of Kristo Das Pal is the record of the political history of Bengal during the past twenty years." \* That history I am not yet in a position to write. I seek, in the first place, to pay a tribute to a memory, and secondly, to read the lessons of a life, and, so far as it is in my power, to teach them. Every life has its lessons; and if the short and simple annals of the poor furnish material for study and reflection, the lives of successful men are even more fitted to instruct the mind and ennoble the heart. The lessons of lives, however, are not such that he that runs may read them; they do not appear on the surface of the lives. They are not observed; they have to be deduced. They are not a part of the lives; they are conceptions and principles which have to be read into the lives. They have, therefore, to be discovered by processes the labour of which the ordinary, busy, work-a-day world is not always in a position to undertake. Even biographers are very often reluctant to perform the tedious task. Fulness of material, rather than suggestiveness of reflection, is the characteristic of the ordinary biography; and, if at the close of the narrative, one were to ask, "Why could not any man,

\* *The Englishman*, July 25, 1884.

with sufficient industry, do all that was done by the subject of the memoir?" he would find it difficult to get an answer. The impression which is often produced on the mind of the reader by a biographical narrative, is, that the events related, came, all in the ordinary course of nature; that under the circumstances set forth, nothing could have happened but what actually did happen; and that the only thing fit to be learnt about the life of a man is a certain order of events. But there is something in the life of a great man which deserves to be studied beyond the mere sequence of events. If history is philosophy teaching by example, and if biography is the history of great men, surely the philosophy which a biography teaches ought not to be left to the reader to discover for himself, but must be taught by the biographer. In other words, if a life has its lessons, the biographer must take the trouble to discover them and teach them to the world. In reading the lessons of a life, it is by no means necessary to know all its details. *This little treatise is mainly a series of reflections,—an attempt to read lessons by the light of relevant facts.* If the problem is to discover the causes of the distinction and the success of Kristo Das Pal, his paper and his party, we are not likely to derive much assistance from a careful perusal of every single article that he wrote, or every single speech he made on the Municipal Board or in the Legislative Councils.

Teaching wrong lessons is worse than teaching no lessons. But wrong lessons are not rare. It is a

lesson very commonly taught that intellectual ability and moral worth are destined to succeed in this world; that in the end they overcome all obstacles; that in whatever field of action a man may be driven by circumstances to run the race of life, intellectual and moral qualifications alone determine the result of the competition. This is analogous to the fallacious commonplace that in the struggle between truth and error, truth is destined to triumph. \*Truth, it is said, survives all persecution. Similarly it is very often said or implied that things which do happen could not but have happened. The course of the world, the growth and decay of nations, the rise and fall of creeds and kingdoms, the success and failure of men, are all attributed to eternal, inexorable laws, working with mechanical regularity; and an attempt is made to eliminate from the list of causes or determining factors all such elements as conditions, accidents, or the voluntary efforts of individuals. With these views in their general form I have no concern. But I observe that already in certain quarters wrong lessons have been drawn from the life of Kristo Das Pal; and they are likely to prove mischievous. Biography, carelessly written, teaches lessons of an optimist character, for biography is professedly a record of the lives of successful men. But all experience—experience of the lives of humble men and great, of the successful and the unsuccessful,—shows conclusively that the mournful lines about the “village Hampden,” and the “mute inglorious Milton,” are only

too faithful a description of the realities of life. Every thing is not for the best. The most worthy man and the most righteous cause are not always victorious. That merit is always rewarded, that truth always triumphs, are propositions which are repeated from mouth to mouth, but which the whole history of the human race contradicts. I endeavour in these pages to make a critical study of the life of Kristo Das Pal. The problem I set before myself is to make a right estimate of the man, to determine the conditions under which he lived and worked, to discover the causes of his success, to analyse the nature of his greatness, to distinguish between the permanent and the transitory elements of his work, between the accidental and the necessary reasons of his prosperity. Such a study has not only a speculative, but a practical value. If carried out in a proper spirit, it will furnish instruction and warning to the Government and the people, and, in particular, to the educated youth of the country. It is of the highest importance to know definitely the position and the prospects of the ablest and best educated men of the country,—what fields of action are open to them, how success may be achieved and failure averted, what kind of success it is possible to attain under existing conditions. Kristo Das Pal, in replying to a complimentary letter addressed to him by a European gentleman, said: "Like the great Commoner of England, I say, 'Paint me as I am,' but alas! how few are there in this world who can impartially perform this task." He is now dead, and some

time has elapsed after his death. The passions and jealousies and party-feelings which may have played around him in his lifetime are now hushed; at the same time, incidents of his life are fresh in the public memory. Even his appearance and his voice have not faded from recollection. The present time, therefore, when the breath of passion is no longer warm, and when all that is worthy of note in the life retains a freshness of interest, offers a suitable opportunity for making a study of the life. I avail myself of that opportunity, and endeavour to do justice to Kristo Das Pal, to perform impartially and diligently the task of painting him as he was. "A true delineation of the smallest man, and his scene of pilgrimage through life is capable of interesting the greatest man; all men are to an unspeakable degree brothers, each man's life a strange emblem of every man's; and Human Portraits, faithfully drawn, are of all pictures the welcomest on human walls." In India, and judged by Indian standards, Kristo Das Pal was not one of the 'smallest' men. A true delineation of him and the scene of his pilgrimage through life, will interest great men as well as small. Such a delineation is here attempted. Here is a Human Portrait drawn by an unskilful hand, but drawn in all faithfulness, in all seriousness, omitting not a single feature of elegance and not a single scar.



## CHAPTER I.

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

KRISTO DAS PAL was born in the year 1838. His family which was of an humble caste, had at one time • been in good circumstances; and one of his ancestors, Käutuk Pal, had attained a considerable degree of prosperity by trade in twist. His father, Issur Chunder Pal, was a man of very small means. Kristo Das received his first lessons in Bengali at the *Patsala* attached to Babu Gour Mohun Addy's school, now called the Oriental Seminary; his progress was marked, and he obtained the prize of a silver medal. In 1848 he joined the English section of the Seminary. Here also he gave proofs of his intelligence and industry. Kristo Das left this institution in 1853, the year in which the *Hindoo Patriot* was started. He read privately with Rev. Milne, a minister of the Free Kirk of Scotland, whom he left after a short time, for Mr. Milne would impart instruction in scarcely any other book than the Bible. He then became a member of a club called the "Calcutta Literary Free Debating Club" and, in concert with several other members, induced Rev. Morgan, the Principal of the Parental Academy, now called the Doveton College, to deliver lectures to a small class which used to meet every morning. This class, of which Kristo Das was a member for about two years, was ultimately absorbed in the Doveton College, and used .

to receive instruction, first from Rev. Morgan who was distinguished as a teacher of youth, and afterwards from Dr. George Smith who edited the *Friend of India*. In the year 1854 the Hindu Metropolitan College was established by Babu Rajender Dutt. Kristo Das Pal was one of the earliest students of this institution, and had the advantage of reading with men like Captain D. L. Richardson, Captain F. Palmer, Captain Harris, Mr. William Kirkpatrick and Mr. William Masters,—all distinguished scholars, all interested in the cause of education, and all moved by the warmest sympathy with the people of this country and with their pupils in particular. In 1857, that is at the age of 19, he left college and commenced his worldly career. Before following him in that career it is worth while recording some interesting details of the school life of Kristo Das, furnished by an old friend of his, Babu Buddon Chunder Sett, to the *Englishman* newspaper of September 17, 1884.

It appears that Kristo Das from his earliest years took a lively interest in politics and possessed considerable skill as a debater. He was the moving spirit of the club already referred to, and by his unwearied services raised it to a position higher than that of any similar association of young men. His essays and speeches commanded attention, as being above the average of juvenile performances. On one occasion he displayed much skill in discussing the most important topic of the day, "The Russian War." At his request, Professor E. B. Cowell of the Hindu College and Mr. William

*Kirkpatrick of the Metropolitan College, delivered* addresses to the club. In 1856 Dr. George Smith having intimated his intention of reading a discourse, Kristo Das on behalf of the club wrote a letter to Rev. Alexander Duff, D. D., inviting him to preside on the occasion. The invitation was accepted. The meeting was held, and Dr. Duff spoke. Kristo Das happened to differ in some points from the Reverend Doctor, and he had the courage of his opinions. He stood up and boldly expressed his dissent. The impression on the audience may well be imagined. About this time, one Mr. George Thompson, a political agitator who took or professed to take a great deal of interest in India, and was remarkable for his powers of speaking, had come out to this country and was residing in Calcutta. Kristo Das with some other members of the club paid a visit to Mr. Thompson and handed over to him a letter drafted by himself for the Secretary, requesting him to deliver a lecture to the Society. Mr. Thompson replied to the effect that it was hardly worth his while to lecture to such a Society as theirs, which was mainly concerned with literary topics and which held its meetings in an obscure part of the town. He also said that his province was politics, and, flourishing a copy of the *Hindoo Patriot* which he held in his hand, remarked that only one native of India understood politics, and that was the editor of that paper, — Hurrish Chunder Mukerjea. Kristo Das did not appear to have been mortified by this answer; he rather thought Mr. Thompson had spoken sensibly. Anyhow,

the occasion is worthy of note as being the first moment of Kristo Das's life when respect for Hurrish Mukerjee and the desire to emulate him, were first inspired by a gentleman whose claims to judge of political or literary capacity could not be questioned. Those are important moments in the life of every one of us when a certain ideal is held up before us, when our tastes are guided, and our ambition stimulated. Kristo Das was nothing if not political. After the suppression of the Mutiny in 1857, he suggested to the club that a letter conveying its congratulations to the British Government should be drawn up and forwarded through the British Indian Association. He drafted the letter. Raja Issy Chunder Singh, Secretary to the British Indian Association, was highly pleased with the letter and thanked the club for its valuable suggestion, promising to carry out its proposal without delay. This was the sort of Kristo Das's work in his early years. It was insignificant, schoolboyish work; but he did it with his whole soul. In this way about two years passed. While, as regards political sentiments, Kristo Das was soaring high in the air, the prosaic aspect of real life continued as stern and forbidding as ever. The young blood ran rapidly in his veins as he spoke and wrote; but how little he had to appease "physical hunger!" He was probably the poorest member of his club. One of the rules of the club ran thus: "Every member is to pay one rupee and eight annas as an annual subscription." This subscription Kristo Das was unable to pay; and, as a special case, he was exempted from the operation of

the rule. His old and affectionate friend thus describes his condition at this period of his life: "At Kansari-parrah, in a lane now styled after his own name, was situated the former humble residence of Babu Kristo Das. There in the outer apartment, in a *khapprel* or tiled hut, on a *tucktaposh* spread over with a worn-out mat where the rays of the sun peeped through the crevices of the thatched roof, he was often seen poring over his books or writing articles for the press. The implements of his writing, on account of his humble position, were indeed very inferior in quality. High and noble as his mind was from infancy, he kept himself satisfied that they would as much serve his purpose as the best of stationery."

When Kristo Das Pal left college he had received a fairly liberal education. Scientific education had not come into vogue; nor was Sanskrit or even Bengalee literature taught systematically in those days; but Kristo Das was well instructed in the English language and literature. He did not take much interest in philosophy; he cared little for mathematics; his knowledge of history was not very large. It was in literature proper that he took special interest. His instincts, however, were neither literary, nor philosophical, nor scientific, but political. The most valuable part of his education was given him by his wordly work and experience. To his work in life he brought a mind well-stored with learning, a heart full of generous impulses, and, above all, habits of untiring industry. The "morning class" which Mr. Morgan taught has been lightly passed over; but as

a member of that class Kristo Das exhibited an amount of zeal and steady energy which marked him out as a student of extraordinary powers and as one who had a distinguished career before him. He used to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning, visit his comrades and proceed with them to attend the lectures. Many of his comrades became tired of the early journey ; but Kristo Das was made of different stuff ; his zeal never flagged. Even before he left college he had imbibed a taste for reading newspapers and writing for them. The circumstances under which the taste was formed are thus related. Gopal Das Sett, secretary to the Free Debating Club, was a subscriber to the *Hindoo Patriot*. Kristo Das read the paper regularly and valued it highly. On one occasion the secretary had written to the *Patriot* a few lines regarding the club, which were inserted. This excited the emulation of Kristo Das. Then again, Kristo Das came to learn that Khetter Mohun Mitter, the president of the club, used to write for some papers, supplying items of news, &c., and not only received copies of those papers free of charge but was fairly well remunerated. To receive a paper without having to pay for it, and possibly to receive some remuneration also, were advantages too great to be lightly reckoned by poor young Kristo Das. He began to contribute on a humble scale to the *Morning Chronicle* and the *Citizen* ; he was favoured with copies of those papers and he received promises of remuneration. He gathered courage. He wrote an article for the *Hindoo Patriot* and laid it before the editor, Hurrish Chunder Mukerji, who ex-

pressed concurrence in the sentiments of the writer, but warned him against the adoption of an ornate style. Kristo Das's article did appear in the *Patriot*, after correction. "His joy knew no bounds,"—a joy which may well be appreciated by all men of literary tastes when they remember the thrill of delight with which they saw their first productions in print. In 1857, after he had left college, he began to "store and enrich his mind with knowledge derived from a course of reading at the Calcutta Public Library and the Library of the Metropolitan college; and he received much assistance from Mr. Kirkpatrick in the selection of books, in the practice of English composition, and in the critical study of the English language and literature." Jointly with a few friends, Kristo Das started the *Calcutta Monthly Magazine* which lived for the brief period of six months. The *Magazine* was owned by Babu Prosad Dass Dutt. From 1857 Kristo Das contributed regularly to the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Citizen*, *Phoenix*, and *Harkara*, and occasionally to the *Englishman*. Mr. William Cob Hurry, the editor of the *Englishman*, valued his contributions much. On the publication of the *Central Star* at Cawnpore, under the editorship of Mr. Knight, the aeronaut, Kristo Das became the Calcutta correspondent of that paper and wrote under the *nom de plume* of "Blue Bird." He was next employed on the staff of the *Hindu Intelligencer*, a paper which was edited by Babu Kashi Prosad Ghose. About this time commenced his regular connection with the *Hindoo Patriot*, in which he wrote a series of articles

on the Indian Mutiny. Hurrish Chunder Mukerjea formed a high opinion of his talents and acquirements "and thought he would be able to do much for his country if God spared him." Kristo Das's first literary essay which was given to the world under his own acknowledged responsibility was a paper entitled "Young Bengal Vindicated," which had been read at an anniversary meeting in commemoration of David Hare, and which was printed and published at the expense and under the patronage of the late Babu Hurro Chunder Ghose, a Judge of the Calcutta Small Cause Court, to whom it was dedicated. Kristo Das Pal owed a great deal to Babu Hurro Chunder Ghose. It was Babu Hurro Chunder Ghose who, in the early years of Kristo Das Pal, had taken him by the hand and directed his education. The essay which had attracted much attention was rather severely criticised by Mr. Meredith Townsend in the *Friend of India*, in an article entitled "Vanitas Vanitatum;" but its reputation was greatly enhanced by D. L. Richardson's disclosure, in the *Calcutta Literary Gazette*, of the fact that the author of it was only a school-boy. Two other pamphlets were written by Kristo Das, one on "Indigo Cultivation," and the other on "The Mutinies and the People" which was a vindication of the loyalty of the people of India. While contributing liberally to the *Hindoo Patriot*, he wrote for the *Indian Field* then edited by Babu Kissory Chand Mittra.

The *Hindoo Patriot* belonged to Babu Hurrish Chunder Mukerjea, and upon his death in the year



1860, Kristo Das ceased to be connected with that journal, but after the lapse of several months, and after the paper had changed hands several times, Kristo Das was appointed as the sole and substantive editor of the paper towards the close of the year 1861. During the period when the paper had passed out of the hands of Kristo Das it had lost a great deal of its sobriety of tone; and it was thought fit, even after his re-appointment, to exercise supervision over the management of the paper. For some months, Babus Prosonno Coomar Tagore and Hurro Chunder Ghose exercised this supervision. It was soon discovered, however, that Kristo Das, though young, was sober and discreet, and could be safely trusted; the supervision accordingly ceased. The history of the *Hindoo Patriot* or of Kristo Das as its editor it is hardly necessary to write. It is sufficient to note that in the hands of Kristo Das the paper attained a high degree of usefulness, distinction and prosperity, and its position at the date of his death is too well known to call for any special notice. After Hurrish Chunder's death Kristo Das became Assistant Secretary to the British Indian Association.\* Hurrish who appreciated him had taken him as his own assistant; and after his death Kristo Das who had been, up to that time, doing duties scarcely above those of a clerk, was selected to fill his place; and worthily he filled it. His services to the British Indian Association were invaluable. In 1879 his services were

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\* Established in 1851.

acknowledged by his promotion to the post of Secretary. The Association has always been composed of wealthy, intelligent, honorable and distinguished men; it would under any circumstances have commanded respect and enjoyed power; but it is doubtful if without a Kristo Das Pal it could have done all the work or even the greater part of it that it has done. The office of Secretary to the Association invested Kristo Das with an importance which he would not probably have otherwise acquired; and the Association got in Kristo Das a thoroughly competent Secretary who not only did its work but determined its policy and guided its counsels. As editor of the *Hindoo Patriot* and Secretary to the British Indian Association, Kristo Das could not fail to attract notice, inspire respect, and grow in importance. He was appointed a Municipal Commissioner and a Justice of the Peace in 1863. In 1872 he was appointed a Member of the Legislative Council of Bengal. He was a Fellow of the Calcutta University. The title of Rai Bahadoor was conferred upon him at the Imperial Assemblage held at Delhi on the 1st of January, 1877. In the following year he was invested with the insignia of a Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire. In the year 1883 he was unanimously elected by the British Indian Association for the seat in the Viceregal Council, placed at its disposal by Lord Ripon. His position, as it rose higher and higher, brought attendant duties which he discharged with unremitting, conscientious industry. His health broke

down, and after a lingering illness he died on the 24th of July 1884, thirty-one years after the *Hindoo Patriot* had been established, and twenty-three years after he had been appointed its sole, responsible editor.

Judged by European standards, such a life can hardly be called eventful. There is very little of enterprise in it. The early years are years of struggle, of hard, strenuous industry. The real, active career is one of mere routine. After Kristo Das has secured the help of some of his influential countrymen, after he has been appointed editor of the *Hindoo Patriot* and Assistant Secretary to the British Indian Association, after he has been introduced to high English officials, his career is practically made for him. No adventure is necessary, hardly a struggle is made. Honours and distinctions come in the ordinary course of things. With a settled income which met all his wants, with a definite prospect in life and a large amount of leisure, Kristo Das had hardly any necessity to exert himself beyond maintaining the position he had already reached. But he was ambitious, and he had a sense of duty. He had conceived high aspirations early in life. Speaking on the 1st of June, 1855 at an anniversary meeting in commemoration of David Hare, he said: "And to pay that debt [debt of gratitude to David Hare] we must do what our education teaches us to do, and what he, if alive, would approve of, namely, act as becomes a Man and a Patriot, and avoid those paths which lead to evil and which he abhorred. . . . In the expressive language of Lord Halifax, may

we so raise our character, that we may help to make the next age a better thing, and leave posterity in our debt for the advantage it shall receive from our example. God willing, we shall not be unequal to the task. Come then! Be Men! Try what you tell, do what you would have done,—glory and your country's gratitude await ye!" The life which was to be dedicated to these aims has closed, and the country may congratulate itself that Kristo Das *did* become a Man and a Patriot, and *has* left posterity in his debt. Glory and his country's gratitude are his. A man of the same abilities, but of less lofty aspirations and a less ardent sense of duty, would have discharged the set duties of his office intelligently and industriously, but would not have devoted his life, as Kristo Das devoted his, to study and work. There are few incidents of his life which are of a striking or brilliant character; and all the romance of it had been played out in childhood and boyhood. His collegiate study and his youthful work were of a desultory character, very much unlike the severe discipline to which an English youth subjects himself. From one point of view the circumstance was fortunate, for he maintained his youthful energy to the last. His intellect had not lost its freshness, its plasticity. "The unhappy children who are forced to rise too early in their classes are conceited all the forenoon of life, and stupid all its afternoon. The vigour and freshness, which should have been stored up for the purposes of the hard struggle for existence in practical

life, have been washed out of them by precocious mental debauchery—by book gluttony and lesson bibbing. Their faculties are worn out by the strain put upon their callow brains, and they are demoralised by worthless childish triumphs before the real work of life begins. . . . Youth has more need for intellectual rest than age; and the cheerfulness, the tenacity of purpose, the power of work which make many a successful man what he is, must often be placed to the credit, not of his hours of industry, but to that of his hours of idleness, in boyhood.” Therefore, it is not to be regretted that Kristo Das never received a University education, nor passed a competitive examination. He had no occasion to be demoralised by worthless childish triumphs. The Calcutta University was not established till after Kristo Das had commenced the real work of life. If he had had to read for University examinations, the liberal education which he was anxious to give himself, and which he managed to receive, in spite of all difficulties, might have been abruptly checked. A compulsory course of Mathematics would have been a fatal bar to his progress. If he was not allowed to read Shakespeare until he had mastered the properties of the Conic Sections, it is probable that he would never have got any opportunity of reading Shakespeare. How many young Kristo Dases are ruined by the regulations of the Calcutta University, absolutely debarred from receiving a high education, it is difficult to estimate. If a University degree is regarded as the only certain test of a

young man's worth, and if it is impossible to get a degree except upon conditions incapable of being complied with by a large number of intelligent young men, the consequences become serious. In the days when Kristo Das was a student, there were no hard regulations about compulsory courses of study, and no particular label was insisted on as a passport to honours and offices.

University education, however, if properly managed, has several recommendations; and it is certain that a university degree confers on its possessor distinct advantages in worldly life. A degree is the cheapest and simplest status-making and reputation-creating agent. A lawyer or a doctor, a speaker or a writer, a scientific or a philosophical thinker, must work strenuously for a series of years and achieve a large measure of success, before they can be accepted by the public as men of culture, as men of worth. The graduate, on the contrary, by virtue of his degree, the reward of youthful industry, steps easily into the circle of the elect, at an early period of life. He may lead an indolent, infructuous life, but the laurels on his brow never fade. The charm of his degree remains potent for all time. What other men can slowly obtain by solid work in life, the graduate has obtained once and for ever, by proving that he is duly prepared for the work of life. As Kristo Das was not a graduate, he could only expect to be known by his work. And it was well that when he commenced his career his incentives to work were strong, and his faculties had not been worn out by the strain of boyish exercises. "His real education was his own work ;

and of him it may be said with the most marked truth, that he was a self-made, a self-educated man."\*

The literary work of Kristo Das has no permanent interest; nor, from a literary point of view, is it of any high value. The charm of his writings and speeches lay not in their literary merits, not in the discussion of general principles true for all time, but in their practical character, in their bearing on the topics of the day, in the keen criticism of fallacious arguments, and in the skill with which facts were marshalled. Each day brought its work, and he disposed it of with consummate skill and ability; but there was nothing in his performance which would invest it with immortality. Extracts from his leading articles, or from his speeches (as a Municipal Commissioner, as a Fellow of the Calcutta University, and as a Member of the Legislative Councils,) or from the memorials which he wrote as Secretary to the British Indian Association, would be insufferably dull, and would not help us in doing justice to his memory. Every article, speech, or memorial that I might reproduce, would require to be prefaced with an elaborate statement of the circumstances under which it came to be written or spoken, of the nature of the controversy which elicited it, and of the temptations to take a different view of current topics from what was actually taken. I shall not, therefore, enter into the details of his work but shall only cite the testimony of competent critics in regard to the manner in which he dis-

\* *The Indian Daily News*, 25th July, 1884.

charged his duties as a Member of the Legislative Councils, as a Municipal Commissioner, and as a Fellow of the Calcutta University. Lord Ripon, speaking at a meeting of the Legislative Council of India, acknowledged his services to the Council in the following terms: "By this melancholy event, [the death of Kristo Das Pal,] we have lost from amongst us a colleague of distinguished ability, from whom we had on all occasions received assistance, of which I readily acknowledge the value . . . . Mr. Kristo Das Pal owed the honorable position to which he had attained to his own exertions. His intellectual attainments were of a high order, his rhetorical gifts were acknowledged by all who heard him, and were enhanced, when addressing this Council, by his thorough mastery over the English language." At a meeting held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, on January 10, 1885, to consider the means of perpetuating his memory, Sir Rivers Thompson, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, said: "Perhaps there are few European or English gentlemen in India who had a longer acquaintance with Kristo Das Pal than I had myself; and this I can assert, without fear of contradiction, that there was no matter of any great public importance, connected either with administration or legislation, in which the Government were more assisted than they were during the last fifteen or twenty years by the independent and unbiassed sagacity and judgment of Kristo Das Pal. I recall his presence and speech as a member of the Legislative Councils, both of the Local Government and of the



Supreme Government ; I recall his prominent position in conduct of the Municipal affairs of this city ; and beyond all these, I remember that, as the editor of the leading Anglo-native paper in Calcutta, he exercised a wide influence for good in educating and enlightening the public mind on all great questions under public discussion." Hon'ble C. P. Ilbert, late Law Member of the Viceregal Council, and Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, speaking at a Convocation of the University, referred in the following language to the work of Kristo Das as a Councillor and as an educationist. "After having served his apprenticeship in the municipal discussions of the Calcutta Corporation, he was appointed a Member of the Legislative Council of Bengal, and there at once made his mark as a ready and formidable debater. The reputation which he gained in this field designated him in public opinion as the appropriate successor of Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore in the Council of the Governor-General, and it was during this period of his career that I learnt to respect him as an opponent and value him as a Councillor and acquired the right to mourn him as a friend. He was a Fellow of the University, and there was no subject in which he took a keener and more constant interest than that of national education. The minute which he wrote for the Indian Text-book Committee on which he served in 1879 is a model of thorough and painstaking work, and the evidence which he gave before the Bengal Provincial Committee of education abounds in useful criticisms and valuable suggestions." Mr. H. L.

Harrison, now Hon'ble Sir H. L. Harrison, Chairman of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation, speaking at the public meeting already referred to, bore testimony to the industry and intelligence exhibited by Kristo Das in doing his work as a Municipal Commissioner. In meetings of Committees, where the most important work is usually transacted, and also in general meetings of the Corporation, the services rendered by Kristo Das were invaluable. Mr. Harrison also dwelt with emphasis on the powers of eloquence displayed by Kristo Das, on the logical rigour of his reasoning and the soundness of his judgment, and, above all, on the sobriety and moderation of his tone.

## CHAPTER II.

### A PROFESSION.

To choose a profession is always a perplexing business. It is especially perplexing if to choose a profession means to discover one's own capability and to do the work one is fitted to do in life. "How unfold one's little bit of talent; and live, and not lie sleeping, while it is called To-day?" That is the great problem. But it is a problem which occurs only to those who are troubled with a sense of Duty, and not to those whose ambition is to "get on." "If you want to make sudden fortunes in it, and achieve the temporary hallelujah of runkies for yourself, renouncing the perennial esteem of wise men; if you can believe that the chief end of man is to collect about him a bigger heap of gold than ever before, in a shorter time than ever before, you will find it a most handy and every way furthersome, blessed and felicitous world." But for any other human aim, I think you will find it not furthersome. If you in any way ask practically, How a noble life is to be led in it? You will be luckier than Sterling or I if you get any credible answer, or find any made road whatever. Alas, it is even so. Your heart's question, if it be of that sort, most things and persons will answer with a 'Nonsense! Noble life is in Drury Lane, and wears yellow boots! You fool, compose yourself to your pudding!'—Surely, in these times, if ever in any;

the young heroic soul entering on life, so opulent, full of sunny hope, of noble and divine intention, is tragical as well as beautiful to us."\* Times had not altered when Kristo Das commenced his career; they have not altered even now. To choose a profession, above all to discover one's own capability and reduce it to performance, is embarrassing a problem to-day as it ever has been. Kristo Das must have felt the embarrassment. After leaving college he obtained employment as Translator in the Court of the District Judge of Twenty-Four Perganas, Mr. Latour. After a few days' service, he was dismissed because Mr. Latour considered him incompetent. In later years, Sir William Grey offered him an appointment in the public service, but Kristo Das declined the offer. His choice had been made; and it had been wisely made. That he rose to distinction in the career he elected, was, to some extent, a matter of accident. He might have been more distinguished in some other capacity, for instance, as a lawyer or as a public servant. But the choice was wise because by his talents he was fitted, above all things, to be a journalist and a secretary and a debater. Not on grounds of worldly prudence,\* therefore, but in accordance with the fitness of things and the economy of nature, Kristo Das's choice was properly made. It would be well to remember that the career which Kristo Das chose was of an exceptional kind. It is not a career which is open to a large number of educated Indians, not a career which can be availed of by any

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\* Carlyle.

but one or two men placed in special situations. The following moral drawn by an Anglo-Indian newspaper is more sentimental than accurate: "The life of the late Kristo Das Pal supplies a typical example of the career which lies open to the educated native under modern conditions, and which is being followed at the present moment with more or less success by many hundreds of his countrymen." \* Kristo Das Pal would never have risen to the position that he did rise to, if he had been Secretary to any Association but the British Indian Association, or if he had been editor of any journal but the *Hindoo Patriot*. In the next place, with all his abilities and attainments, and even in his capacity as editor of the most influential journal and secretary to the most influential Association, he could not have attained all the honours that he did attain, if he had not been acquainted with high officials. The English people and the English Government have a great respect for wealth and the people who possess it. The British Indian Association represented the Zemindars, the wealthy people of Bengal, and the *Hindoo Patriot* was its organ. A Secretary to the Association, if he also happened to be editor of the journal, was sure, in those days, to be respected by the Government, though he might be vastly inferior to Kristo Das Pal. But Hurrish Chunder Mukerjee was Secretary to the Association and editor of the journal, and yet he did not receive the same official honours as Kristo Das. The reason is to be found in the fact that Hurrish

was not acquainted with high English officials. He kept himself aloof from them. Therefore, one is justified in regarding the distinction earned by Kristo Das as something of a wholly exceptional character, holding out no hopes to educated natives of India. I am not aware that even one of my countrymen is following with success a career similar in material points to that of Kristo Das Pal. The bestowal of honours on a single meritorious individual like Kristo Das, will not blind us to the realities of Indian life, the real nature of the predilections of the Anglo-Indian official. For one single capable man that is honored, a hundred noodles, aristocratic and plebeian, Hindu and Mahomedan, are decorated, salaried, and in every way advanced in life. In the generality of cases an intelligent Hindu who speaks and writes English well, is vigorous in criticism and independent in demeanour, is, to the average English official, an object of jealousy and, possibly, of hate. The abject "native" whose English is indifferent, who lacks brain and backbone, is the real favourite. The ability with which Kristo Das Pal conducted his duties, adorned and dignified his success, but the recognition of that ability by the Government is no proof that Government is ready to reward merit wherever found.

Kristo Das deserves credit for the courage, the honesty and the wisdom he displayed in declining to enter service under Government and to seek admission into the legal profession. He had so many friends and patrons that he could easily have entered, if he had

cared to enter, the public service. He must have seen pleaders of the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut making their fortunes. He had received a good general education, and there would have been no difficulty in the way of his passing the necessary legal examination and becoming a pleader. But he proved superior to the temptations of these pleasant possibilities. He elected a career which was less lucrative than the alternative careers open to him, and which held out a less favourable prospect than they. The British Indian Association might or might not live; the *Hindoo Patriot* might or might not live; he might or might not be retained in service. The uncertainty did not stagger him; he boldly made his choice. Encouraged by his example, educated young men might in the present day elect a career similar to his. But he had no encouraging example to follow. No one in this country had pursued a career like what he adopted. His predecessor was in Government service. It is clear that in making his choice he was not guided by considerations of mere prudence but that he consulted his own intellectual tastes and, above all, loyally carried out an Idea. (Those are noble and exemplary lives which are devoted to the steady, determined, engrossing pursuit of lofty Ideas definitely conceived early in life. Kristo Das had already formed his Idea. He was to become a Man and a Patriot, and was to leave posterity in his debt for the advantage it should receive from his example. This Idea he thought he could better carry out in the capacity he chose, than as a clerk in a Government.

office, or as a member of the legal profession. His very choice showed that he had already become a Man and a Patriot. Nothing but manly independence could have prevented him from following the prevailing fashion and seeking lucrative offices; nothing but patriotism could have made him a willing servant of an Association of his own countrymen. Natives of India generally consider it more honorable to serve Englishmen than their own countrymen, and more honorable to serve officials or the Government than private individuals or associations. One often hears Bengalee clerks swear and say that they will never serve Bengalees. Repugnance to serve one's own countrymen is unpatriotic; but it is a feeling largely prevalent among the people of India, especially among the less educated classes. Kristo Das had no such meanness. Patriotism was to him no abstraction but meant sympathy with, and respect for, those concrete realities, his own countrymen. In cheerfully accepting service under the British Indian Association, and continuing to serve it after he had attained the highest distinction, he displayed feelings very rare in the Indian breast. The career of Kristo Das Pal, though of an exceptional character, will nevertheless teach his countrymen that under favorable circumstances, talents and industry win prosperity, and that wealth, public esteem and official honours are the reward not only of success in the legal profession, or of distinction in Government Service, but also of honest, useful, political work done in the retirement of the study, in the heated atmosphere



of public meetings, and in the dignified dulness of the council chamber.

It is proper that we should recognize the dreary blankness of the prospect which lies before our educated young men. It seems to be generally admitted by high Indian officials, that educated young natives of India have no bright outlook before them. One Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, speaking at a Convocation of the University, suggested to the graduates that they should travel far and wide in quest of fresh fields and pastures new, that they should colonise new tracts of earth, reclaim waste lands, start new trades. Another Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, on a similar occasion, feelingly dwelt upon the dignity of poverty, and invited graduates to the honorable and almost woolly honorary task of reprinting and translating early mediæval texts of Bengal. Things have come to a lamentable pass when young men can be invited to nothing more profitable than rude adventure in unexplored regions, or the ascetic life of ancient *rishis* and the early Christian saints. Another suggestion is that educated young men, graduates for instance, should betake themselves to technical industry. It is meant, we suppose, that they should not be above the occupations of a carpenter, a potter, or a blacksmith. If these suggestions are seriously made, we must believe that India can no longer find reasonable occupation for her educated sons. In a short time we shall probably hear that there is no room even for mechanics, or workers on mediæval Bengali literature. "Surely in these times,

if ever in any, the young heroic soul entering on life, so opulent, full of sunny hope, of noble and divine intention, is tragical as well as beautiful to us." In India, Government is largely responsible for the tragedy. Responsible officials do sometimes recognise the tragedy, though they take no means to avert the catastrophe. More often they affect to be pleased with the situation, and seem to say that if Kristo Das could succeed in life, other educated men could succeed as well, if they had the same abilities, the same patience, and the same perseverance. To offer such encouragement is to insult the intelligence of the people.

## CHAPTER III.

### SUCCESS IN LIFE.

When we speak of the success of Kristo Das Pal, what do we mean by it? We mean the appreciation of his abilities and his work by the Government and the people. As a result of appreciation by the Government, official honours were bestowed on him. He was made a Municipal Commissioner, a Justice of the Peace, a Fellow of the Calcutta University, a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council, a Rai Bahadur, a Companion of the Indian Empire. As a result of appreciation by the people, the prosperity of the *Hindoo Patriot*, his influence, his reputation, his election as a Municipal Commissioner after the elective system had been introduced, and lastly, his election by the British Indian Association as its representative in the Viceregal Council, are worthy of note. The one kind of success was largely dependent on the other, and both were dependent, first, on certain intellectual and moral qualities, and secondly, on certain accidents. The influence and the reputation of Kristo Das Pal and the prosperity of his journal were, to a great extent, the result of the estimation in which he was held by Government; and official honours and public esteem were alike the result of sterling qualities, useful work, and certain favorable conditions of life.

It is essential to recognise the fact that, in this country, success and failure practically mean appreciation and want of appreciation, encouragement and want of encouragement, by the Government. The recognition which a man receives from *Government* is the standard by which the *people* judge him. If France is the "country in which the *people* is most alive," India is the country in which it is absolutely dead. An individual honored by the Government, a cause advanced by the Government, an institution patronized by the Government, acquire in this country an importance to which other individuals, causes, and institutions, dare not lay claim. Therefore, recognition by Government is a necessary element of success in life. It is necessary not only to men in the service of Government, and to men who seek service under Government, but also to men in independent walks of life. Independent walks of life are not independent of the support of the people; and if the people regulate their opinion by the official standard, men in independent walks of life are not wholly above the necessity of securing the patronage of Government. The lawyer, the doctor, the merchant, the journalist, are all gainers by official recognition. Appointed to a Legislative Council, or invested with the Order of the Indian Empire, they feel their position advanced, their reputation extended, and their chances of professional success and distinction improved. This is an evil. That must be an unfortunate country in which no class of men looks with unconcern on the official smile or frown, and in which all classes of people practically

abandon their right of independent judgment and offer themselves to be carried along in the current of official opinion. If the men belonging to the independent professions, and respectable and wealthy men belonging to no profession, are driven to seek official favour, there is none left to guide public opinion, to direct criticism of public measures, to make the people conscious of their national existence and confident in their own strength. The evil is probably a necessary one in all countries which are not self-governing, but in this country it exists in a specially aggravated form. Official power and official honour in all countries bring position and prestige, but in India they have a more than ordinary charm. In other countries popularity marks a man out for official honour; here, official honour creates popularity. Consequently, the people and their leaders are demoralized. A man borne to the pinnacle of power by popular applause, is a spectacle with a very different moral from that which is to be learnt from the crowning of a courtier with official laurels. Kristo Das Pal was an able and independent man upon whose brow the laurels sat with peculiar grace and appropriateness, but they would have been all the more graceful if they had not been official. His greatness was of a kind which would not gratify the ambition of an ardent youth in a democratic age; but it was the highest attainable under existing conditions of Indian life, and it was attained by no unworthy arts. Kristo Das knew every Lieutenant-Governor of his time, and stood on friendly terms with all, except,

probably, Sir George Campbell. His old friend and patron, Babu Hurro Chunder Ghose, had introduced him to one or two of the most influential and energetic Lieutenant-Governors. His appointment to the Bengal Legislative Council was not, however, the result of intimacy with high officials; it was not obtained, as such appointments are sometimes obtained, by sneaking and sycophancy. He had well earned the honor. His able management of the *Hindoo Patriot*, his work as a Municipal Commissioner, his clever memorials drawn up on behalf of the British Indian Association, had made him known as a public-spirited citizen and a well-informed and capable critic. No non-official member of the Local Council had given better proofs of fitness. His claims to a seat in the Viceregal Council, when he came to get it, were even more assured. He had for several years done good work as a member of the Bengal Legislative Council; he had distinguished himself as an elected Municipal Commissioner; his journal had been developing. But he was not directly nominated a member of the Viceregal Council. Lord Ripon offered to the British Indian Association the unprecedented privilege, of electing a member for appointment to the Council; and the Association, very wisely, elected Kristo Das Pal. He was appointed, and he proved himself a worthy member. As a Municipal Commissioner he had acquired only a small, local reputation, but the *Hindoo Patriot* had been slowly building up his fame in the country. It was his appointment to the Bengal

Council, however, which extended and brightened his reputation and deepened his influence. His elevation to the higher Council still further advanced his position and confirmed his leadership. If it is true that the *Hindoo Patriot* secured these honours, it is also true that the honours contributed largely to make the *Hindoo Patriot* what it was. A paper edited by a Member of Council, could not fail to be invested with special importance. Such a paper must give, it was thought, the most weighty views and the most accurate information. Besides, people considered it prudent to subscribe to the paper and so oblige in a small way an editor who by his official position might be able to render some service to them. Kristo Das would not of course sell himself for anything, least of all for a subscription; but men imagined that they could not look an editor in the face and ask a favour of him without, first of all, registering themselves as subscribers. Zemindars, and all men who pretended to be such, valued the *Hindoo Patriot* for its being the organ of the British Indian Association; and men in Government Service and *umedwárs* (seekers of service) were anxious to support it and be introduced to its editor. Not only the prosperity of the *Hindoo Patriot* but the social influence of Kristo Das were aided by his official position. Every morning there was a crowd of visitors in the house of Kristo Das; and even the evenings he could not devote to himself. The spectacle would remind one of the crowd in the house of the old Roman Jurisconsult, described by Sir Henry

Maine. But while the crowd in the house of the lawyer or the physician is attracted by hopes of professional assistance, a very different kind of hope animated the men who congregated in Kristo Das's house and gave him no rest by night or by day. They wanted employment in Government service. They were attracted by his official greatness, and they appreciated his official influence. The men who meet in the drawing-room of the distinguished literary or political personage in England, are moved, very often, by intellectual sympathy with the object of their admiration. They meet to venerate a man or a woman who is to them an embodiment of an ideal, a type of greatness which they appreciate. In a certain sense it is true that the men who gathered about Kristo Das did appreciate the greatness which was his, so far as that greatness was official. But they had, generally speaking, no intellectual sympathy with him, no admiration for all that was spiritual in him. His ability as a journalist, as a speaker, and as a secretary, would not have given him anything like the prominence which resulted from his official position. He is now dead ; his official influence has ceased ; and how many of his old admirers are now interested in the welfare of his son or the perpetuation of his memory ? There is very little of real appreciation of intellectual greatness in this country ; witness the disastrous termination of movements to perpetuate memory. A distinguished or a successful man is serviceable while he lives, and he never wants admirers ; when he dies, his country



makes a feeble effort, if it makes any effort at all, to erect a memorial. It is not possible to draw from the life of Kristo Das Pal the pleasing lesson that the country has learnt to appreciate the greatness of its great men. The only thing satisfactory about the life is the readiness of Government, on particular occasions, to encourage and reward merit.

An Anglo-Indian newspaper\* wrote shortly after the death of Kristo Das Pal: "There are given to the world now and then, at rare intervals, men to whose hands power and influence gravitate as a matter of right and of the public weal. Such men do not need the adventitious assistance of an active life in the camp or the field. Neither do they find it necessary for their purposes to aspire to high social position. They are men to whom rank may come, but for whom rank is more an acknowledgment of service than a means of influence; they are not men born to command in the ordinary sense of that term; they do not affect their countrymen by their brilliance, nor do they appeal to the imaginations of the masses they move so surely and so mightily. They influence rather than command; they guide rather than govern; their judgment is trusted, and they do not stimulate public opinion, or excite the public mind. They, on the contrary, form the opinions of those about them, and out of a fulness of sympathy with popular requirements, they give the best and most popular expression to the popular and common thought. Such a man was Thiers in France

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\* *The Indian Daily News*, 25th July 1884.

until he assumed the Government of the country, and in a yet more complete sense was he such a man who yesterday passed away from our midst—the greatest native servant of India that any Province yet produced—the Honourable Rai Kristo Das Pal, Bahadur.” This is a complacent view which, men acquainted with the condition of the country and with the life of Kristo Das Pal, would find it difficult to accept. To Kristo Das rank was not merely an ‘acknowledgment of service’ but was the principal ‘means of influence.’ He did need the ‘adventitious aid of an active life’ to secure power and influence. It was by no silent mesmerism that he came to form the opinions of those about him. He did, no doubt, give expression to public opinion, but public opinion in this country is the opinion of the respectable and the educated classes. As an educated man, connected with an Association of Zemindars, he had little opportunity of ascertaining ‘popular and common thought.’ Not only his abilities, but the Zemindars and the Government, made him what he was. There is no analogy between his career and that of M. Thiers. Kristo Das Pal did not make and could not have made his reputation by literary work; but it was by literary work that M. Thiers came to acquire his position, and the journalistic writings of Thiers reached a very different class of men from that influenced by the writings of Kristo Das Pal. Literature has not had its prospects improved in India because Kristo Das Pal attained success in life. His success was not literary; his talents were not literary; he

did not succeed in instilling into the minds of the people a love of literature. Educated young men devoting themselves to literature or science can derive no encouragement from such a life as that of Kristo Das. Even in a capacity very similar to that of Kristo Das, men may not find encouragement. If a journalist wrote excellent articles, what chance would he have to get them read? The *Hindoo Patriot* was sure to be read; that fact was of no small advantage to Kristo Das Pal. Even if a journalist could command attention, he would only get credit as a brilliant writer or as an ingenious critic; his views would not be taken as representing public opinion and would not influence the action of the Government. The *Hindoo Patriot* represented a class which the Government respected; and the views of Kristo Das expressed in that journal would secure more than ordinary consideration. No Association had the same prestige as the British Indian Association; and its memorials and its secretary received a treatment which other memorials and other secretaries could not expect. These are facts which are apt to be overlooked by impetuous admirers of successful lives. When Mr. Ilbert said that Kristo Das Pal "was a great orator and a great journalist, a man who would have made his mark in any country and at any time," he expressed an optimistic faith in fate, which is shared by several men of intelligence and culture. It is difficult to see how Kristo Das could have made his mark as a journalist either in England or India, if he had to start a journal of his

own, and had not been given the sole charge of an influential journal, his salary being fixed and he being kept free from all anxieties as to the financial condition of the paper. It is difficult to see also what use he could have made of his oratorical powers except as a member of debating clubs, unless Government appointed him to posts in which a display of powers of speaking was necessary. It is possible to imagine a man of the abilities of Kristo Das distinguishing himself in some career or other, for instance, as a lawyer, or as a physician, or as a teacher, or as a clerk. But to contemplate such possibilities is to dream. What is essential to our present purpose is to observe that though Kristo Das was a great orator and a great journalist, it does not follow that he would have made his mark in any country at any time. Before he could make his mark he must be educated; and he could not have been educated if education had not been cheap in Calcutta. Nor, probably, could he have completed his education if he had to satisfy compulsory tests in Mathematics, Sanskrit, or Physical science. With all his energy and industry, his youth would have been frittered away in desultory pursuits, if he had not availed himself of the wise and generous guidance of Babu Hurro Chunder Ghose; and without the assistance of that gentleman he could not have been introduced to the officials who advanced him in life. In Hurrish Chunder Mukerjee he found a kind-hearted, appreciative patron who first established his connection with the *Hindoo Patriot* and with the

British Indian Association. His political training he received from Hurrish Chunder Mukerjee and also from Prasunno Coomar Tagore, a distinguished lawyer, and Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Montrieu, brilliant and successful advocates of the High Court of Calcutta. Maharaja Rama Nath Tagore took a fatherly interest in him and gave him counsel. Pandit J-war Chandra Vidyasagar also helped him on. It is not every man of ability that is so fortunate as to secure such patronage and such guidance. While in the greatness of Kristo Das we recognise the elements that were his, let us not omit to take note of the contributions made to it by favouring circumstances and sympathetic individuals. For cheap education he was indebted to two institutions, the founders of which have entitled themselves to public gratitude. Babu Gour Mohun Adhy, the founder of the Oriental Seminary, and Babu Rajender Dutt, the founder of the Metropolitan College, afforded facilities of education to several men who have been distinguished in life and who, in the absence of such facilities, would have been lost to the country.

Kristo Das Pal received the *Patriot* a dying concern and left it flourishing. What contributed to the success of the paper was mainly his ability. After every allowance has been made for favorable conditions, the fact remains that the *Patriot* which, in other hands was dwindling, in his hands prospered. It is true, time adds to stability, and age carries with it prestige. An old newspaper has an advantage over a new; but

where a paper which has been systematically declining, suddenly revives and goes on progressing, and the revival is coincident with a change of editorship, the cause of the progress is not far to seek. It is the genius of the new editor which gives the paper new life. Kristo Das, therefore, fully deserves the following compliment which Mr. Ilbert paid to his memory. "Succeeding at the age of some of the graduates of to-day, to the management of one of the oldest organs of public opinion in this country, by the readiness and versatility of his pen, by the patient industry which he displayed in mastering the details of the subjects with which he undertook to deal, by the fairness, breadth, and moderation of his utterances, he gradually and steadily advanced its reputation during his twenty-three years of editorship and raised it from a nearly moribund condition to the first place among native Indian journals." But journalism is a profession which holds out poor prospects in this country. No native of India except Kristo Das Pal has made his fortune as a journalist; and it is not likely that in India fortunes will be made by journalism. The people of India do not live a political life; they have no political enthusiasm. Not being a self-governing people they have little interest in the proceedings of Government. They view the Government as a huge machine grinding out laws, taxes, and Resolutions, a machine which it is hopeless to resist and whose movements it is useless to observe. They are poor, and occupied with the struggle for existence; or, they are apathetic, and take things as

they are. Such a people can only feel a dilettante interest in journals. The vernacular journals do not reach the Government, and are little read by the educated classes ; the journals written in English do not reach the masses. Consequently, no Indian paper exercises the same pervading influence in India that a good English journal does in England. The *Patriot* was prosperous, as compared to other native Indian journals, but was a failure in comparison to the best English journals. As self-government extends and as education makes progress in India, journals may grow in importance ; but it is doubtful if any Indian journal, particularly in Bengal, will have the same position, relatively to the altered circumstances of the country, that the *Patriot* had in its day.

Success in life is impossible without opportunities. The fool neglects opportunities ; the man of genius improves them. But, before opportunities can be neglected or improved, they must come. It is commonly said that they do invariably come to great men ; but it is a remark which is true only of such great men as have succeeded in life. Those who are great in intellect and character, and who, for want of opportunities, pine for ever in the cold shade of neglect, do not fall within the range of observation of the moralising biographer, precisely because they are unknown. The lives of successful men are the only lives that are studied, and as all such lives are full of lucky accidents, it is inferred that by some providential arrangement, by some sort of pre-established harmony, favorable accidents

always occur to great men. The inference is wrong. Greatness takes advantage of, and utilises, favouring circumstances ; it is not independent of them. In the next place, great men recognise more quickly than others that particular circumstances *are* favouring. The man who is *not* great, fails to see the opportunities that may be about him. One of the elements of greatness is the power to seize instinctively that possibility which may be most easily developed into an actuality. An opportunity was offered to Kristo Das when he was given the sole charge of the *Hindoo Patriot*, and he used that opportunity in the best way possible. He did his work as a journalist with tact, industry, and conscientiousness. Without the opportunity, it is scarcely likely that he would have been distinguished as a journalist. Without his abilities the opportunity could not have been used in the way it was used.

Let us go a little deeper into the philosophy of success and ask, What *is* an opportunity? From one point of view, every man has a vast variety of opportunities. For instance, it may be said that an educated native of India has the opportunities of starting a journal, writing books, becoming a lawyer, or a doctor, or an engineer, accepting service, establishing a school, opening a shop, emigrating to a region where competition is not severe. From a practical point of view, all these are *not* opportunities. If particular occupations demand capital, and capital is wanting, those occupations offer no opportunities. If in a par-



ticular profession one has to wait a long time for success, and one cannot afford to wait, that profession offers no opportunity. If an occupation is good and noble in itself, but adds out no prospect of reputation, or wealth, or even of comfortable living, in a particular country, it offers no opportunity, properly so called, to a man living in that country. Take literature as a profession. The same literary qualities which in one age or country are appreciated, may not be appreciated in another. The same literary work which is a financial success in one set of circumstances may be a failure in another. Success, therefore, is something which is relative and not absolute. As physical life is impossible without the adaptation of organism to environment, or, as it is said, the adjustment of internal to external conditions, so success in life is impossible without the adaptation of the intellectual and moral qualities of a man to the social, political, intellectual and economic condition of his country. This is a truth which is forgotten, or not known at all, by those who look with contempt on men who fail in life. If Kristo Das with all his abilities and all his honest, hard, useful work, had not attained success, few would have admired him. In India, if in any country, nothing succeeds like success; and the acquisition of official honours, and, especially, of wealth, is, in the estimation of the Indian people, an essential element of success. Ideals of greatness are different in different countries and in different ages.\* In India, at the

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\* See the Article on "Ideals of greatness" in the Appendix.

present day, greatness is associated not so much with intellectual or moral excellence as with wealth, official influence, and official honours. Success, in the sense of worldly prosperity, is dependent not upon the intrinsic worth of an individual, but upon the relation of individual worth to surrounding conditions. If a man fails, his failure may be the result, not of any fault of his own, but of the backwardness of his country. Literary efforts may fail, not because they are insignificant or devoid of merit, but because the country does not appreciate them. If the country had a truer appreciation of literature, the efforts would succeed. If a man or his work is to be impartially and intelligently judged, success or failure will not help us in forming the judgment. If a truthful shop-keeper fails in his trade because he is truthful, the right-minded critic will not look upon him with contempt because he is a failure, but rather curse the country in which a truthful shop-keeper cannot flourish.

- There are conditions of life in which failure is honorable and success dishonorable. Where success can only be attained by unworthy arts, one had rather not be successful. It is not always that intelligence or independence succeeds. Men of original ideas seldom attain the success they deserve. Having to break new ground they do harder work than those who come after them. They lead opinion; they create a diversion of taste; they reveal new subjects of interest; and if they attain partial success, they prepare the way for the greater success of those who follow them. Kristo

Das achieved success in a kind of enterprise which was not absolutely original, yet little appreciated by our countrymen. He was not the father of Indian journalism, but he devoted himself to it when it was in its infancy, and, from one point of view, his success was attained under harder conditions than what now exist. The number of men who read English, and interest themselves in politics, was much smaller in the days of his youth than it is to-day. By his skill and industry he created, in the educated people of the country, interest in politics and in newspapers. His success, therefore, was well deserved; and it was possible under the conditions of Indian life which then existed. Though we are living in a later day the conditions are not favourable to the success of a new species of journalism. Literary, scientific or philosophical journals, will not succeed, though they may be started by competent men. A high order of periodical literature, like the quarterly and monthly publications of England, can scarcely exist. Even political journals of any but the stereotyped form will not be a success. Professional journals relating to law or medicine have seldom existed for an appreciable length of time or attained any distinction. In fact, no kind of native Indian journalism is, or promises to be, in the present circumstances, a distinguished or profitable concern; not even that kind which, in the hands of Kristo Das, for special reasons, proved a success. The career of Kristo Das Pal exhibits a kind of success which can operate as no encouragement to the educated Indian

youth. Of the opportunities open to such a youth, neither a journalistic, nor a literary, nor a scientific career is one. There are worthy individuals here and there, who might usefully and profitably adopt such a career in other countries; but the conditions of Indian life do not favour it; and success, it must be remembered, is not the possession of talents nor the display of them, but the adaptation of them to environing conditions. Few natives of India care to buy books simply for purposes of intellectual edification or recreation. Consequently, there is no publishing enterprise in India, and literature as a profession does not exist. The only books which sell in India are school-books and such law-books as are of constant practical use to the lawyer. Students cannot pass their examinations unless they read some books; and lawyers cannot do their professional work unless they possess some law-books. These are, therefore, the only two classes of English books which sell largely and bring money to the authors and publishers. Vernacular books which gratify the popular taste for romance or religious mysticism, also command a sale. Other books than these no body will pay for. To the cultivated European a good book is as much an essential of life as the bread he eats or the tea he drinks. The cultivated Indian who views a good book in the same way is a rare person. For this reason, among others, a literary life will not be successful in India. A political life will also be an impossibility so long as Government is not representative.

The one fact, above all others, which constitutes what is called the "success" of Kristo Das Pal, is his elevation to the Legislative Council of India. Anything short of a Membership of the Supreme Council would not have made him nearly as distinguished as he was. So many unworthy, or rather worthless, men have been appointed Honorary Magistrates, Fellows of the Calcutta University and, even, Members of the Bengal Legislative Council, that to be put in the same category with these recipients of honour is not always a distinction. Membership of the Viceregal Council is, however, still a thing of honour; and how did Kristo Das obtain it? Fortunately, Lord Ripon was Governor-General of India; the Bengal Tenancy Bill was under consideration; the idea occurred to Lord Ripon that he must appoint a representative of the Zemindars, and that he could get a representative in no better way than by asking the British Indian Association to choose one; and the British Indian Association had the good sense and the generosity to choose Kristo Das Pal as its representative. Can all this combination of circumstances be regarded as the necessary result of the abilities and the work of Kristo Das Pal? If not, his appointment to the Supreme Council, which is a most material part of his "success," will inspire little hope in men as deserving as Kristo Das. Representative Councils, when they come to exist, will inspire some hope.

## CHAPTER IV.

### KRISTO DAS PAL AS A WRITER.

Kristo Das wrote very good English. An Anglo-Indian newspaper observed: "No native of his generation possessed such a wide idiomatic command of English,"\* meaning, probably, such a wide command of idiomatic English. Very nearly to the same effect, an Anglo-Indian gentleman of education and position writes: "The old race of native writers, who were masters of pure, polished and idiomatic English, appears to have died out with Kristo Das Pal."† Indeed, the latter opinion is nearer the truth than the former. There were several of Kristo Das's contemporaries who wrote as good English as he, and some of them wrote better than he. But educated Bengalees of the present generation are not nearly as good writers as the "old race of native writers." The writing in which Kristo Das excelled was of the sober, simple, business-like kind. He never attempted fine writing, and he does not seem to have been equal to it. The best specimens of his writings are to be looked for not in the columns of the *Hindoo Patriot* but in his minutes and memorials. To write a good, neat, effective leader requires sometimes a delicacy of touch, a fineness of

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\* *The Englishman*, 25th July, 1884.

† Mr. G. A. Stack (Professor, Presidency College, and Editor, *Calcutta Review*) in *Concord* for January 1887.

the æsthetic sense which Kristo Das does not seem to have possessed. The rare and casual efforts he made to write "beautifully," were not, as a rule, successful. His writings in the *Hindoo Patriot* were characterised by good sense, breadth of view, and logical power, but seldom by superior artistic merit. He talked prose all his life without ever having discovered the fact. In his other writings than journalistic, Kristo Das showed a high degree of skill. He never wrote a book, and wrote only two or three essays in his earlier years; but he wrote a large number of minutes, memoranda, and memorials, and these he wrote exceedingly well. Where he had to collate facts, to manipulate figures, to assail premises or conclusions, to tabulate results, to advance arguments, to cite authorities, to expose inconsistencies and detect fallacies, he was in his element. He used the simplest forms of expression but avoided colloquial vulgarisms. He employed but little the arts of rhetoric in his maturer years. His style was lucid, logical, unpretentious. There was no affectation about the man or his style. Kristo Das deserves credit for his simple, accurate, vigorous writing. Fine writing more quickly secures the approbation of the multitude than plain writing does; it is more attractive to the oriental mind; its charms are more readily observed. The beauty of a simple style is very tardily appreciated,—appreciated only by the mature judgment of the practised writer and the judicious critic. One may go further and observe, that in the life of a nation, as in the life of an individual,

love of the ornate style precedes love of the simple. It is probably an illustration of the law in accordance with which love of the ornamental precedes love of the useful. Just as the young man overloads his style with gaudy ornament which his mature judgment disapproves, so the rhetorical writing of one generation is looked upon with cold indifference by the sober, practical writers of the next. Kristo Das resisted the temptations of all that kind of style which is called smart or racy, ornate or brilliant. In electing to write easy natural prose, he took a step clearly in advance of his times. In his day, and even in our day, a native of India who wrote simple English would get no reputation for learning, at any rate among his countrymen. The learned man is expected to imprint some of his learning upon every line he writes; and no writing makes an impression upon the common herd which is not elaborate, gaudy, and rich in allusion. The full meaning of English words is seldom apprehended by a native of India with the same precision with which cultivated Englishmen apprehend it. English words, even the commonest, are more suggestive to an English ear than they are to the Indian ear. Consequently, if a certain number of words will convey an idea to the mind of an Englishman, a larger number of words will generally be needed to convey the same idea to the mind of an Indian. What is deficient in quality has to be made up by quantity. Words have to be piled on words. Therefore, writing which seeks to influence Indian readers comes to



be verbose. In the next place, if one form of words will produce an impression of a particular degree of vividness on the English mind, a highly coloured form of the same language will be necessary to produce an equally vivid impression on the Indian mind. Hence an ornate style comes to be in fashion. The Indian palate relishes no food unless stimulated by curries and condiments, and the Indian intellect interests itself in no discourse which is not soaked in rhetoric. A style like that of Kristo Das is not, however, suited to all purposes. It was suited to his purposes and his business which were practical. In dealing with political topics of the day, with hard matters of fact, there was no occasion, no necessity, for writing in the style of the novelist. The critic\* previously referred to rightly observes : " Young Bengal has gone in for oratory instead of literature, forgetting that a style which may be very suitable to a platform oration is not at all suitable in a leading article. The articles in Anglo-Native journals are made up to a great extent of notes of admiration and notes of interrogation and notes of exclamation. They are also painfully wanting in that symmetry which is the soul of effective literary treatment within the brief and definite limits of a leading article." Kristo Das always wrote in a style appropriate to the subject-matter in hand, and did not go out of his way to indulge in declamation or imaginative scene-painting.

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\* Mr. G. A. Stack writing in *Concord*.

In the art of writing, Kristo Das got material help from his European teachers and in particular from Mr. Kirkpatrick and Mr. Sullivan. They took especial interest in him and guided his studies. He had the advantage of being under teachers who were not only learned men, but practical men of the world, skilled writers, and earnest and sympathetic instructors. Captain D. L. Richardson was a well known man of letters. Captain Harris was known to be a good writer and was editor of the *Morning Chronicle*. Captain F. Palmer was distinguished as a scholar and as a writer. These were the men who taught Kristo Das, not in that cold, formal way which has now become common,—professor and pupil scarcely ever exchanging a word, and the professor only dictating “notes,”—but with a lively, personal interest in the proper education of the youth committed to their charge. Mr. Kirkpatrick looked over his exercises, directed his private study, and selected books for him from the Calcutta Public Library. “There is nothing which spreads more contagiously from teacher to pupil than elevation of sentiment: often and often have students caught from the living influence of a professor, a contempt for mean and selfish objects, and a noble ambition to leave the world better than they found it, which they have carried with them throughout life. In these respects, teachers of every kind have natural and peculiar means of doing with effect, what every one who mixes with his fellow-beings or addresses himself to them in any character, should feel bound to do to the extent of his capacity and

opportunities.”\* In the case of Kristo Das it is easy to see that elevation of sentiment did spread contagiously from his teachers to him, and that he caught from their living influence a contempt for mean and selfish objects and a noble ambition to leave the world better than he found it. Several of his teachers were distinguished journalists, and he wanted to be a journalist himself. He wanted to be a Man and a Patriot and to leave posterity in his debt. His earliest writings appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, and he received ample encouragement from its editor. Beyond the circle of his teachers, the man who gave him the greatest help in acquiring powers of writing was Hurrish Chunder Mukerjea, the founder of the *Hindoo Patriot*. The articles which Hurrish Chunder wrote have never been surpassed in this country in point of literary form, Kristo Das looked upon him as a master. But it was not only his friends and teachers who formed his style. There were the critics. The Anglo-Indian journalists were severely critical; and criticism always improves literature. *Vanitus Vanitutum* was probably the earliest piece of criticism which Kristo Das endured; it was certainly not the last. Superadded to friends, teachers and critics, there was the *system* under which Kristo Das was brought up and which favoured the acquisition of the English language and literature. The Calcutta University has not produced any men who, in point of literary or historical knowledge or powers of writing, could be compared to the best pro-

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\* John Stuart Mill.

ducts of the old system. Not 'thoroughness' but 'shallowness' is the word inscribed on the portals of our University: and it is matter for national congratulation that men like Kristo Das Pal and Dwarka Nath Mitter had never any occasion to enter those portals.

The most important factor remains to be mentioned and that is Kristo Das himself. Friends, teachers, critics, system, cannot do for a man what must be done by the intellect and the character of the man himself. Kristo Das was an apt student. He was "Euphues." His discourse read at the Hare Anniversary Meeting in 1855 had defects of style; but for a boy of seventeen it was a highly creditable performance. His early contributions to journals, and his youthful exercises in debate, exhibited a literary taste, a knowledge of grammar and an amplitude of reading which many a Bengali graduate might envy. He was an assiduous student to the end of his days; and if he was a good writer at the age of twenty-three when he became editor of the *Patriot*, he could not help being a better writer as years passed on. Reading improves a man's powers of writing; but not any reading. If a man writes nothing but English and reads nothing but Latin and Greek, his writing will not probably be a good specimen of a chaste, Saxon style. Nor will a man improve his English style by constant reading of German literature. For general culture, a wide course of reading is necessary. It may include a great deal of ancient and modern literature, a great deal of

science and art. To be a good writer of modern English prose, however, one need not continue encyclopædic study or dive deep into the past. Nutriment must be suited to the waste occasioned by exercise. The intellect which seeks to create poetry must feed on poetry, and that which seeks to produce prose must nourish itself on the best works in prose. The journalist who seeks to write well must read the best modern journals and books. Hurrih Chunder Mukerjea and Kristo Das Pal wrote well, not simply because they read what should have been read, but because they did not give themselves much trouble about philology and literary antiquities. They were wise in their adoption and wise in their rejection. An educated Englishman whose tastes are literary, comes to acquire a good English style, though his reading may not be select ; but a native of India must be careful. With all possible advantages of nature and education, a native of India may fail to acquire a good style not only by reason of deficiency, but also by reason of excess, of learning. Indiscriminateness of reading is fatal, unless one can, by sheer strength of will, resist the impressions likely to be made on the mind by bad, antiquated, or uncongenial modes of style. An Englishman imbibes modern English from the atmosphere about him ; a native of India has to acquire it by conscious, elaborate efforts. Therefore, modern English books have to him a special value, if he wants to write well. The reading of Kristo Das in his years of manhood was not desultory, but deliberate ; it was discriminate ; and

it was directed to the end, primarily, of acquiring useful, practical knowledge, and, in a subordinate degree, of forming style.

Style, it has been well said, is the man himself. It is an expression of the writer's character. This fact may be brought under the general law that Art bears the impression of character. Style reflects character precisely because it is a product of art. Science is universal; its truths do not vary according to age and clime. The music, the painting, the sculpture of a nation, on the other hand, bear the stamp of its distinctive genius, and differ from the music, the painting, the sculpture of another nation. If there are any agreements, they are reducible to science. Science builds upon agreements. Art is particular, distinctive, irreducible to formulæ, and, generally speaking, incommunicable by precept. It can only be learnt by practice. If in the practice of a particular art, facts are discovered to stand in the relation of cause and effect, and to be capable of being classified, and explained by laws, those facts become the material of a science. Art, therefore, precedes science. Some arts have hitherto defied all efforts to reduce them to science. The art of writing is one of them. In spite of scientific treatises on Grammar and Rhetoric, there exist no definite rules which may be mechanically applied to produce a good style in the same way as rules may be followed to produce a chemical compound or ascertain the date of an eclipse. The artist works more by instinct than by reasoning, relies more upon empiricism than scientific

induction. The cunning of his hand is all his own, and though it may be imitated and practised by sympathetic souls, it cannot be reduced to rules. Genius does its most valuable work, makes its happiest guesses, sees the direction of discovery, more in the rude ways of art than according to the settled methods of mediate knowledge which science teaches.) The writer, like the poet, is born, not made. A good style, like other works of art, flows not only from the intellect but from the feelings; and there go to the making of a good writer, not only grammar and vocables, logic and rhetoric, but richness of imagination, exuberance of feeling, a sense of beauty and fitness, an ear for harmony and, in particular, for cadences. Therefore, the style is the man; it is the visible embodiment of his mind and character. Practice of the art of writing is a discipline the value of which is seldom adequately recognised. Language is at once the cause and the effect of thought. It does not simply express thought. It determines and fixes thought; it helps in the analysis of thought. Language is not only the product of the mind, but it reacts upon the mind. Clearness of ideas makes a perspicuous style; and perspicuity, attained by sheer strength of will and by a love of the beautiful, contributes to clearness of ideas. Erroneous ideas, confidently believed in, have revealed their errors when set forth in language of formal precision and elaborate minuteness. The language of indignation or sympathy, used by accident or for affectation, evokes the feelings of which it is the fitting expression. The intelligent and

sensitive actor, repeating certain words, comes to feel as one who would naturally speak them. Progress of thought has often been arrested by the want of suitable words to express particular ideas, facts, or relations, and has been facilitated by the addition of suitable words to the vocabulary of philosophy, science or art. The clothing of abstractions with distinct names has led to the fallacies of realism; the use of one and the same word to express two distinct ideas, has, in ordinary minds, obliterated the distinction between the ideas; the use of more words than one to express one and the same idea, has led to the creation of distinctions without differences, and has suggested unreal "explanations" of phenomena, which are only disguised statements of the phenomena themselves. Such is the power of language. It is not only the slave but the master of thought. Language is articulate thought, thought rendered definite. If thought can at all exist without language, it exists in a vague, chaotic, nebulous form. It is language which rescues it from a fleeting, evanescent, undefined character, and gives it definiteness, fixity, stability. Language is thought evolved from the vague to the definite, from the loose to the coherent. The intellectual exercise of writing, therefore, is one of high value. The highest powers of construction, of methodical arrangement, of logical analysis, are called into play in the execution of a good piece of literary work. The piecing together of facts, the origination of ideas, the ordering of ideas, the rejection of crude conceptions and generalizations which crowd upon the



mind, the avoidance of obscure, inaccurate, ineffective modes of statement, the due observance of the qualifications to which general propositions are subject, and of the conditions of a valid argument, all demand an intellectual vigour, vigilance and versatility which any body with the slightest experience as a writer will not under-estimate. The purely artistic merits of a literary performance demand other qualifications which have already been referred to.

The literature of a people is the expression of its life. If a "good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit," the totality of good books, called literature, is the precious life-blood of all the select spirits of the nation. All that is spiritual in a nation, all that it has achieved or striven for by the "thaumaturgic faculty of thought," is reflected in its literature. Its searchings for truth and its yearnings for happiness, its political aspirations and its moral ideals, are all there. There is the voice which guided its counsels and shaped its destiny. There is, in visible form, the life which humanity lives from age to age. The study of a literature, therefore, is the study of the people whose product it is. Appreciation of a literature is appreciation of the ideas, the habits, the work of the people. Assimilation of a literature is the assimilation of the ideas and modes of thought embodied in it. The sympathetic student of English literature, one who has imbibed its spirit, is anglicised in thought. When a European scholar, learned in Sanskrit language and literature, is called a *pundit*, when an English-

man learned in Greek language and literature is called a Greek, and when one, not a Mahomedan, is, in consequence of his Persian learning, called a *Munshi*, there is an appropriateness in the designation which has something more than a sentimental or humorous character about it. An Englishman who has nourished his mind mainly on Greek literature is become a Greek, not ethnically, of course, not in respect of political rights and duties, not necessarily in religion or outward ways of life, but in the general cast and tenor of thought. His culture is Greek; his criticism of life is Greek. The native of India whose culture is English, is, to all intents and purposes, an Englishman; he is English in the general cast and tenor of his thought. Such a one was Kristo Das Pal; and the excellent English style he had at command marked him out as every inch an Englishman. The idioms of a language are characteristic of the people whose language it is; they indicate to some extent the idiosyncrasies of the people. The metaphors current among a people take their colour from the life and the associations of the people. And the proverbs of a people embody their worldly wisdom, the concentrated results of their experience. Every nation has its own idioms, its own metaphors, its own proverbs. Whoever has mastered the idioms, the metaphors, and the proverbs of a people and can use them naturally, has become, to a very large extent, intellectually assimilated to the people, naturalized in their territory. An Englishman thoroughly acquainted

with German literature and capable of writing German with ease and grace, is as much in intellectual sympathy with the Germans as with his own people. Literature imbues the mind with ideas; practice of the art of expression completes the process of assimilation. A native of India who has largely read English literature and has acquired the art of writing English, is intellectually akin to the Englishman; and Kristo Das Pal was such. He was English in thought and in expression. He had the practical sense, the political insight, the unimpassioned nature of the cultivated Englishman; and his style, in point of terseness, precision and sobriety, was thoroughly English.

## CHAPTER V.

### KRISTO DAS PAL AS A SPEAKER.

The true medium of communication between man and man is language uttered by the living voice. Writing is only symbolical speech. The intellectual qualifications of the speaker may, therefore, be presumed to be the same as those of the writer. They are, no doubt, to some extent identical; yet the difference between a speech and an essay is material. What constitutes beauty in the one is not necessarily beauty and, indeed, may be a defect, in the other. Both are alike addressed by human beings to human beings; but the circumstances under which they are addressed, and the purposes for which they are addressed, differ. The speaker is present in his own proper person, in flesh and blood, before the men he addresses. The physical part of his performance is of nearly as much importance as the intellectual. The personal appearance of the man, his voice, his gestures, the expression of his countenance, all impress the audience nearly as much as the bare grammatical and logical meaning of his words. If the personal elements are favourable, the meaning gains, if unfavourable, the meaning loses, in effect. The external conditions also determine the effect. If they are favourable, the effect is great. The solemnity of the gathering, the splendour of the hall, the brilliant illumination, the thrilling interest of the audience, the atmosphere surcharged with electricity, the echoing and re-

echoing cheers,—all bring to the speech an accession of power. Depressing and otherwise unfavourable conditions take away all the life that there is in a speech. When a man speaks to other men, there is communion not only of soul with soul, but there is a physical relation established between speaker and listener. Eyes meet eyes; sound passes from mouth to ear; the expression of emotion evokes emotion. The good speaker, therefore, must possess certain physical qualifications which are not essential to the writer. He must also possess certain moral qualifications, chief of which is self-possession. Even his intellectual accomplishments must be somewhat different from those of the writer. He requires ready wit and brilliance; he may do without comprehensiveness and depth. Abstruse reasoning, prolonged reasoning, learned references, are fatal to the success of a speech. The listeners have to be kept in a situation of intellectual ease and comfort. Whatever puts a strain on their faculties, kills their enjoyment and makes the speaker a bore. The speaker seeks a momentary triumph; he wants a vote or a verdict in his favour. The writer hopes to produce permanent conviction. The speaker deals, as a rule, with topics of the hour; the writer is at liberty to devote his energies to subjects of abiding importance. Political topics may be dealt with in speeches; matters of philosophy, science, historical research or literary criticism, are fit material for written discourses.

All speeches are not of the same kind; nor are all writings of the same kind. There are speeches which

approximate to the character of essays ; and there are writings which are declamatory. The sermons addressed to a cultured congregation by a learned and philosophical divine, the exhortations of an accomplished statesman to a learned senate, the verbal discourses of the scholar addressed to a body of scholars, are excellent and appropriate, precisely in so far as they are rich in the qualities of good writing,—in literary elegance, accuracy of expression, and compactness of ideas. A cultivated audience can bear a severer intellectual strain than a mob, and will, therefore, enjoy speeches which may be dull and fatiguing to a mob. Then again, in a speech addressed to a mob, the personal qualities of the speaker and the scenic accessories of the situation, are of greater moment than in a speech addressed to a cultivated body of men. Voice and action are always essential elements of a speech, but their impression on the educated is not so deep as on the uneducated who can scarcely distinguish good reasoning from bad.

• Kristo Das Pal spoke well as a senator. He hardly ever addressed a mob ; and it is doubtful if he could ever have succeeded in swaying the vulgar. He had a stately presence and a clear full-toned voice, and was a master of the art of elocution. But with all these advantages he would have failed with the mob, for he was not excitable and could not indulge in emotional displays ; his demeanour was dignified, his tone sober, and he could not speak without reasoning elaborately. His speaking was of the higher order, suited to a select audience. An English

critic\* observes with truth that Kristo Das was "one of the best writers and speakers" that Bengal had produced and that when he was nominated to a seat in the Bengal Legislative Council, "he speedily established his reputation as one of the most skilful debaters in that body. His speeches show no trace of that looseness of thought and style which so often characterizes even the best efforts of natives who express themselves in English. On the contrary, they are just as compact and logical as any which we might expect from a practised orator addressing Mr. Speaker." An Anglo-Indian newspaper† observed: "As a speaker he stood far ahead of any of his countrymen, and his utterances were, in many respects superior even to those of his colleagues whose mother tongue was English, and whose training had been entirely British." Similar is the judgment of the *Saturday Review* which wrote: "Kristo Das Babu reasons, debates, and delivers himself, very much like an intelligent Englishman. We may go farther and say that this gentleman has bettered his instructors, and many a *Topeewala* would be glad, if on a platform or board he could display the same fluency of diction, command of argument, versatility, and fecundity of resource." Mr. H. L. Harrison, speaking at the public meeting held on January 10, 1885, referred in the following terms to Kristo Das Pal.

\* Mr. John Macdonald writing in a book called "Pillars of the Empire. Sketches of living Indian and Colonial Statesmen, Celebrities and officials." Edited, with an introduction, by T. H. S. Escott. London.

† *The Englishman*, 25th July, 1884.

"Often, after being fascinated by his marvellous fluency in a tongue which might be called a foreign tongue to him were it not a tongue over which he possessed such a perfect command,—I say while admiring his marvellous fluency and powers of declamation, I have found it my duty afterwards, no less than my pleasure, to read again the speeches which he had delivered and to admire and study the wonderful skill, the art of concealing the art by which he would lead up his hearers step by step to the very points which he was prepared to make, by which he would succeed in imbuing his hearers with the enthusiasm which he himself felt, on the questions regarding which he was enthusiastic; and lastly, to admire that faculty which he possessed—without which no one can claim to be a real orator,—I mean that faculty of seizing such opportunities, as circumstances might present, to divine, as if by a kind of inspiration, the sentiments of those whom he was addressing, and of seizing the precise moment of saying the precise word which would fan the enthusiasm of those he was addressing into a flame."

It is probable that Kristo Das Pal had not among his own countrymen that reputation for powers of speaking which he had among Englishmen. Natives of India generally appreciate the emotional kind of oratory better than the argumentative kind; they appreciate the speech of the demagogue better than the speech of the senator, the Irish style better than the English. Quiet humour they do not see; they do not see when a speaker "makes a point;" but



violent declamation, scathing sarcasm, broad jokes, the elaborate demolition of an argument with pomp and circumstance, they fully appreciate. The same facts which account for the paucity of good judges of writing, account also for the paucity of good judges of speaking. In fact, the circumstances which would develop sound criticism of speeches are even more scarce in India than the circumstances which develop correct ideas of good writing. People in India may get access to the best English books; they have almost no opportunity of hearing the best English speakers. Their ideas of a good speech, therefore, differ even more widely than their ideas of good writing, from those of English critics. Kristo Das does not appear to have been regarded by the generality of his countrymen as a superior kind of speaker. They like fiery speeches; they want the speaker to be not only animated but agitated. In his speeches as in his writings Kristo Das had outstripped the standard of his countrymen. Set speeches he seldom made; and when he did make them, as in replying to a toast at a trades' dinner, they were failures, for in those speeches he brought himself down to the level of the ordinary Indian declaimer. He excelled in debate. He spoke with calm dignity and logical precision, and never employed unfair methods of warfare. His speeches like his writings produced their effect not by tricks of rhetoric but by the abundance and accuracy of the information they contained and by the arguments they set forth. As a speaker he was "an age too early" in India.

## CHAPTER VI.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

At the public meeting of January 10, 1885, Sir Steuart Bayley, now Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in moving a Resolution, gave an admirable analysis of some of the intellectual and moral characteristics of Kristo Das Pal. Referring to his success in life, Sir Steuart said: "It is not easy in a few words to find an explanation of such remarkable success. It is obvious that without great abilities to begin with, and without remarkable industry to second those abilities, such success would have been impossible. But though his abilities and though his industry were rare, yet they were not absolutely unexampled. But given those rare gifts, I ask, what were those peculiar qualities which enabled him to attain, and to maintain during all his life, an absolutely unique position, not only in the admiration of his countrymen, but in the respect, regard and affection of all, of whatever nationality, who came in contact with him? Well, gentlemen, I cannot pretend to offer an adequate explanation. In the course of the twenty years of my acquaintance with him I think the qualities in his character which principally struck me were—first, the admirable balance of his judgment; and, secondly his thorough sincerity. By sincerity, I mean not only moral sincerity, which is the duty of every good man, but I mean also mental or intellectual sincerity—that quality which

makes you feel, in talking to a person, that his opinion is the outcome of an independent mind, and not merely the outcome of foregone prejudice or passion. To those qualities I may add a third, which has already been alluded to, and that was his unfailing temper. As I say, I have known him for twenty years, and have never failed to admire the extraordinary self-control with which, whether in fighting a winning or a losing cause, and especially in the latter, which is far the more difficult of the two, he never for an instant forgot himself, never said anything which he need be sorry for."

The ability of Kristo Das Pal was unlike the ability of others of his countrymen. Natives of Bengal have displayed a capacity for language, for mathematics and the other deductive sciences, for metaphysics, for theology. They have seldom been remarkable for shrewd political insight,—the faculty for which Kristo Das Pal was most distinguished. A great lawyer, mathematician, or religious teacher, would be a distinctively Indian genius, and exhibit national talent in its highest development. A great deal of the ability of Kristo Das was of the European rather than of the Indian sort. His aptitude was for politics. His leading articles were not, from a literary point of view, the best that an Indian could write; in fact, better articles have been written by his countrymen; but they were the most practical and business-like that have ever been written in this country. The writings of Hurrish Chunder Mukerjee have been highly praised

by Englishmen and Indians, and it will probably be admitted that as regards style they were superior to the writings of Kristo Das Pal. But as regards examination of details, comprehensiveness of grasp, and practical discussion of current political topics, the articles of Kristo Das were superior even to the writings of Hurrish Chūnder. In dealing with the general principles of legislation and administration, with the rights and duties of Government and subjects, with the grievances of particular individuals, Hurrish Chūnder displayed admirable skill. Kristo Das was in his element in reviewing an Administration Report or a Financial Statement, in discussing Military Expenditure or the Bengal Tenancy Bill. His mind revelled in matters practical, in the details of subjects, repulsive, by their dryness, to the majority of countrymen. A Bengalee youth, fresh from college, would write discourses on Burns or Shelley, on Freewill or Foreknowledge, on Female Education or Early Marriage. Kristo Das, at an age earlier than that of the average graduate of to-day, wrote on the Indian Mutiny and on the Relations between Indigo Planters and Ryots. At a still earlier age he discussed topics political in his capacity as a member of the Free Debating Club. When the mutiny ceased, it was he who suggested to older heads the idea of sending a congratulatory address to Government. His highest interest was in politics; and he studied political topics in no dilettante spirit but with real earnestness. His mind was not repelled by dry details of facts, by the prosaic logic of figures. From details he rose to wholes,

and was remarkable not only for keen, microscopic inspection of *minutiae*, but also for broad, statesmanlike views. His countrymen, as a rule, decline to descend from wholes to details.

Active, practical interest in politics has not only an intellectual but a moral aspect. It is an interest which can only be felt by those who recognise the reality and the earnestness of life. He who has discovered that man is but a shadow and life a dream, will be occupied more with matters spiritual than with matters terrestrial. The reality of life is better appreciated in Europe than in India; and Kristo Das Pal, in so far as he recognised that reality, was more akin in temperament to the European than to the Indian. The manner in which he conducted his journal was more English than Indian. Journalists in India often resort, and in past times they resorted oftener than now, to unworthy arts to secure public patronage. Kristo Das was above such arts. He was uniformly sober and candid in criticism and was never consciously unjust. His unflinching temper was, as Sir Steuart Bayley observes, one of his chief characteristics. The temper of the Indian journalist is very often sorely tried. If he happens to displease any man or class, not only is his journal attacked by the irritated party but he is personally abused. His antecedents, his pedigree, his personal appearance, the details of his private life, are all laid under contribution for the purposes of satire. The taste of the people who read journals or any other kind of literature in India, is so little cultivated that

they discover nothing improper in this sort of satire ; they rather like it. An Anglo-Indian journalist answered an argument of Kristo Das Pal's by calling him an "unctuous whale." Such an answer was about as cogent as Dr. Johnson's famous refutation of Berkeley. Kristo Das, even in dealing with the most dirty tricks of his opponents, never forgot himself, never lost his temper.

Temper is a good index of character. An uncontrolled temper means predominance of the Emotions over the Reason ; a subdued temper means superior rationality. Self-restraint differentiates man from the brute, the civilised man from the savage. Explosiveness is the characteristic of the savage, deliberateness is the characteristic of the civilised man. As individuals or nations advance in civilisation, they acquire more and more self-control. Education is an artificial process of civilisation. It makes men more of men ; it transforms the barbarian into the gentleman. In so far as it succeeds in attaining these ends, it is a good education ; in so far as it fails, it is a bad education. Brutes display their anger by physical violence alone ; men may do so either by physical violence or by language, spoken or written. It is the object of true education to develop the distinctively human attributes and to suppress, or, at any rate, to regulate the distinctively brutal attributes. Individuals, like nations, present an ascending scale of meekness and benignity. At the lowest point stands the untutored savage ready to hack and hew his fellow

human being; at the summit are the great religious teachers of humanity, the emblems of love and sympathy and kindly feeling. Temper is one of the expressions of general character, and is one of its best tests. When, therefore, it is observed that Kristo Das Pal was a man of uniformly unruffled temper in private as well as public life, let not the fact be hurriedly passed over as a casual or insignificant phenomenon. The settled serenity of his soul was expressive of the whole man; it was the most important feature of his character. It played the most important part in his life. It was that more than anything else which made him a leader of men. His intellectual attainments and abilities, and the favourable circumstances in which he was placed, would all have failed to give him influence in society if he had been fidgety, intolerant, and ready to break a lance on the least provocation. A smooth temper is not one of the virtues for which the people of this country are remarkable. Indians are a great deal more sensitive, irritable, and explosive in behaviour than people of the west. The lowest classes in all countries are very much the same; but the cultivated and respectable classes in India, less accustomed to toleration, free criticism, and individual liberty than the corresponding classes in England, are more prone than they to take offence at the slightest contradiction. This is one of the reasons why organisation does not succeed as well in India as it does in England, and why so many clever and educated natives of India have failed to ac-

quire a social influence like that of Kristo Das. Never was the sobriety of Kristo Das Pal more strikingly manifested than when the legislative measure nicknamed the Ilbert Bill was under consideration. That was a time when almost the whole country was in a state of frenzy. Englishmen and Indians were alike convulsed; they dealt hard blows at each other and would listen to no compromise. Most of them uttered words which probably they now regret, and even in the Council chamber language was used, some of which, at the present day, can hardly be read without a blush. Kristo Das Pal was probably the only conspicuous man who maintained his balance. His speech delivered in the Legislative Council with reference to the Bill must for ever remain a model of sober, dignified language, clothing the most exalted ideas of statesmanship and the most fervent sentiments of loyalty. Mr. Markby, late a Judge of the High Court, Calcutta, thus wrote about him after his death: "I believe that in himself he represented that feeling which he so well expressed in Council on the 9th of March 1883, which I have now before me, and when he expresses confidence in the ultimate justice of England, notwithstanding the regrettable events that were then passing around him. It required some courage to express that confidence at that moment, and the one solitary satisfaction that one can derive from the struggle of the past year is that it drew forth such expressions of feeling. That struggle must be renewed again and again, until the principle is established



which we then fought for, and so long as there are men like Kristo Das Pal who will carry on the struggle in his spirit, I am not afraid of any evil consequences." Mr. Markby here looks at the speech in its political aspect; but it is important in another aspect, namely as evidence of the temper and the general habits of thought of Kristo Das Pal.

Kristo Das Pal's undisturbed equanimity, his moderation, his quietness, instead of being admired, used to be condemned, by a large number of his countrymen. Educated natives of India, especially the young men among them, found Kristo Das's temperate criticism of public measures a little too "slow." He could not keep pace with their intellectual rush. His performances were much too tame for the youthful section of this emotional people. Week after week he disappointed impetuous young men by his sobriety. If any person had attacked him in a newspaper, if Government had introduced any objectionable measure, if a public officer had violated his duty, sanguine people would expect Kristo Das to put forth his whole strength and demolish the obnoxious man or measure in furious style; and when they found that he ignored all personal attacks on himself and assumed a calm, judicial tone in dealing with public topics, they were all disappointed, and some were provoked by his "weakness" as they chose to call it. Kristo Das knew that his moderation made him unpopular amongst a certain class, that several of his readers wanted more "fire" in his writings; but to please any

body he never descended to declamation. His sense of justice and his large worldly experience made him careful in his estimate of men and things. He knew how public men were liable to be misjudged, how easy it was for false reports to originate and to spread, how difficult it was to discover the real nature and the ultimate consequences of public measures, and how the views of men might be influenced by personal considerations. Without being a political philosopher he knew too well the laws of political life to be dismayed by the casual utterances, however unjust or unwise, of a single statesman, or by the enactment of a single law, however ill conceived. A man who is merely literary is apt to think that the fate of nations and empires depends wholly on writings and speeches. When such a man takes up a newspaper and reads a speech or an essay which he considers to be mischievous, he feels that unless he writes a reply the country will perish. He is excited; and he writes his reply with the earnestness of the patriotic soldier fighting for his country. His writing must be impassioned. The shrewd, practical man of the world, on the contrary, knows that the destinies of the world do not depend on leading articles and Government Resolutions. Nations and institutions die hard; they can bear a great deal of stupid doctoring. In this country, especially, where there is no continuity of Government or policy, there is little cause of alarm, however dangerous the present symptoms may appear to be. A particular ruler may be reactionary, but his rule

is short-lived and there need not be fear of permanent mischief. Kristo Das was a hopeful politician. He had confidence in the justice of the English Government and in the elasticity of the Indian people. He believed that, somehow or other, matters would settle themselves in the right way, and there was no use being in a hurry or being excited. He did his work of criticism in a quiet, sensible spirit from day to day, fully believing that the best arguments would ultimately win the day.

The men who were provoked by the moderation of Kristo Das did not hesitate to attribute to him a want of independence. They thought that Kristo Das abstained from trenchant criticism of public measures because he was anxious not to offend the officials. The charge is absolutely unfounded. Kristo Das did criticise public measures in the most vigorous way, and all officials knew him to be an uncompromising controversialist. He abstained from personal attacks, and he never imputed motives. He criticised measures as measures. Personal attacks are always more vigorous and exciting than the logical dissection of Bills, Minutes and Resolutions; but Kristo Das could never persuade himself to be vigorous at the expense of honesty and fair play. Sir Steuart Bayley is not the only official who bears testimony to his independence. Sir Richard Temple writes\* : " Among the Native members [of the Bengal Legislative Council] the most useful

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\* *Men And Events of My Time In India*, p. 425.

in my time was Kristo Das Pal, and if there was such a thing as the functions of a legitimate opposition, they were ordinarily exercised by him. The proceedings being conducted in English he was a good speaker, with a very correct pronunciation, and more fluency than most Englishmen; as a debater, too, he was ready and acute. He was, on the whole, next after Sir Madhava Rao, the best-informed Indian whom I have ever known; his assistance in legislation was really valuable; and in public affairs he had more force of character than any Native of Bengal. He belonged to a caste below that of Brahmin and was the editor of the *Hindoo Patriot* newspaper, published in English. This paper was the organ of the Bengal Zemindars, and was in the main sustained by them, but it had a large circulation otherwise both among Europeans and Natives, being conducted with independence, loyalty and learning."

Mr. James Routledge speaks\* in plainer terms: "The Government acknowledged his rare merit. No Government could ever buy his eloquence, which was both conspicuous and practical, or divert him in the least from the path marked out by his conviction.<sup>3</sup> That Kristo Das Pal was independent, must be acknowledged by those who had watched his movements carefully. He was not a man of feeble convictions; he was full of earnestness. His moderate tone was the result of his anxious

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\* In a letter addressed to the *Kendal Mercury and Times*, under date Gloucester, August 19, 1884.

desire to be just. He was personally acquainted with many high officials of his day and knew that they and their actions were very often misunderstood. When he came to sit in judgment over them he was careful to see that they had a fair trial. He happened to know very often the facts which would put him in an attitude of sympathetic criticism, and knowing all the grounds of defence he could not be keen in his attack. It is ignorance which sharpens the edge of criticism. Correct criticism must be well-informed, but such criticism is disagreeably sober to the impulsive student of politics; smart, sensational criticism is highly prized by the majority of readers, and such criticism derives its main strength from ignorance. Kristo Das Pal studied every important public question so thoroughly in all its aspects, he knew so much of the men who decided the fate of questions, that he could not, like the mob, take always the most uncharitable view of men and measures, or judge them only by appearances. Added to this superior acquaintance with men and affairs, there were the sense of justice and the habit of self-control which accounted for that moderation which reckless critics called half-heartedness, and which they attributed to a want of independence. Sir Richard Garth, late Chief Justice of the High Court of Calcutta, observed\* with truth; "To my mind, it was one remarkable trait in this man, the wonderful tact, the patience and the temper which he displayed under the

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\* At the Public Meeting of January 10, 1885.

most trying circumstances. However keenly he may have felt, however vigorously or eloquently he may have defended his own position in any matter, he could speak and write on the most burning questions in the Council Chamber or in his journal, with an amount of good temper, and fairness, and moderation which was an example to all public men." Not imbecility, indifference, or servility, but a strong sense of justice, a calm, judicial temperament, a capacity and a readiness to ascertain facts and judge upon evidence, were the true reasons of his moderation. Never in the whole course of his public life was Kristo Das found to be a trimmer. Not a single instance could be found where he made an ignominious attempt to sell his conscience. In 1877 when the title of Rai Bahadur was conferred on Kristo Das Pal, he acknowledged the honour in the following terms in the *Hindoo Patriot*: "We are not a little surprised to find our own name among the Rai Bahadurs. If we may be allowed to be light-hearted on such a solemn subject, may we ask what dire offence did we commit, for which this punishment was reserved for us. We have no ambition for titular distinctions . . . . . We are certainly grateful to the Government for this token of appreciation and approbation of our services, but if we had had a voice in the matter, we would have craved the permission of our kind and generous rulers to leave us alone and unadorned, following the footsteps of those honored, illustrious Englishmen, by whose side we are but pigmies, who have preferred to remain

without a handle to their names." Dr. Johnson would scarcely have written anything more saucy than this. The more we look into the details of the life of Kristo Das, the more we are convinced that independence, rather than the want of it, was his chief characteristic. It is probably not to be wondered at that among his bitterest detractors were men who were themselves remarkable for meanness. As they knew nothing of the men and events they discussed, as they had no reputation to lose, as they had something to gain by a display of savagery, they could write fiercely, and fancy they were exhibiting independence. Placed in responsible situations, vested with power and dignity, brought into intimate personal relations with high officials, they would have sunk into the lowest depths of sycophancy. If they bore ill will to any official they would expect Kristo Das to rate him severely, and if he refused to satisfy their grudge they would begin to bear ill will to Kristo Das himself, and charge him with want of independence. Several of them in accusing him of various imaginary faults acted like the Athenian who voted for the ostracism of Aristides because he was tired of hearing him called The Just; some others became his enemies because he could find no appointments for them. There have been respectable men who systematically cringed to him to secure appointments or introductions to officials, and who, when their object failed, as systematically reviled him. His colleagues on the Municipal Board and in the Legislative Councils admired his

independence, but the lickspittles and turncoats of society, the fashionable idlers who seek appointments and do not deserve them, the fire-eaters who revel in brutality, were ready to charge him with weakness and subserviency. In his later days his position was so high and his influence in society so great that instead of his courting official favour there was reason for the highest officials to seek *his* support. At the present moment the men who are high enough to dispense with the patronage of a Municipal Chairman are extremely scarce.

Tenacity of purpose was one of Kristo Das's leading characteristics, and it was remarkable all the more by reason of its rarity among Bengalees. Impatience, desultoriness, flightiness, are among the chief defects of the Bengalee character. Scarcely any Bengalee except Kristo Das Pal could have edited a journal for twenty-three consecutive years with unabated energy and worked for an association for about the same period. Men work steadily in their trade or profession, to earn a livelihood and to become rich. Practice of the trade or profession, after some experience, becomes mechanical, and does not make fresh demands on energy or originality; it hardly exercises the feelings at all. Devotion to the service of the public has seldom any permanent charms for the Bengalee. It may attract him in his youth, but he soon gives it up. Love of money increases with age. It is not considerations of money alone which withdraw a man from such work as that of the journalist. The work itself proves to



be dull and tedious. It has very little of personal interest in it; its results are too remote. The journalist or the secretary, after twenty years of agitation, may see one little idea accomplished. It is not everybody that can trust to time and the medicating force of nature; but Kristo Das had learnt to work and wait. Through good report and evil, under all conditions of health, amid all fluctuations of domestic peace, in every phase and variety of circumstance, he worked on, boldly and steadily, clinging to the post he had chosen early in life. He never made any effort to get rid of his troubles and seek a smoother life. He rejected offers of Government Service. He took interest in his work and retained his youthful zeal and energy to the last. Many men of abilities have had their prospects marred by sheer fidgetiness; Kristo Das was saved by his steadiness. A great deal of his success in life which is erroneously attributed to his intellectual superiority, was really due to his regulated temper and his "steady-pulling diligence." He was no mere sheet-lightning but could "condense himself into thunderbolts."

Englishmen may find some difficulty in appreciating Kristo Das's labours as a journalist. He was no mere "editor" in the sense in which men are "editors" of English journals. He was the whole "staff" of his paper. The English editor only edits the contributions of other people, but Kristo Das, like many other Indian journalists, had no regular contributors to aid him, and wrote nearly the whole of his paper.

He received only slight and casual assistance. Even as a young man he had the whole brunt of the labour thrown upon him. When the paper was placed in his hands, it was understood that some men would help him in his editorial work, but these men after giving him fitful assistance for a short time left him to take care of himself. At no period of his life did he get any assistance worth the name. In his later years, when his health was breaking down, he used to complain of want of support. Mr. B. M. Malabari\* bears the following testimony: "We saw nearly three years ago that the Patriot was being sadly overworked. We more than once heard him deplore the want of co-operation from amongst the educated class, as he sat on the floor scribbling his articles on the palm of his hand," that is, of course, on paper resting on the palm of his hand. How many English editors are ready to work under such conditions? Yet the articles he wrote were not, as regards practical sense and logical reasoning, inferior to the articles which appear in English journals. Members of the "educated class" very often succeed in educating themselves into a complete inactivity. It is only a few who are able or willing to write; and they are greatly overworked. Kristo Das had not only to write his paper unaided, but to write all documents for the British Indian Association, and to write minutes as a member of the Legislative Councils and of the committees on which

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\* In the *Indian Spectator*, 27th July 1884.

he might have had to sit. He wrote petitions for men who came to him with grievances. He was one of the active workers of society and not one of that degraded class which seeks to acquire literary fame by employing the brains of others. Englishmen are hardly aware of the number of literary impostors in native Indian society. To pose as an orator by reproducing a speech committed to memory is a traditional kind of imposture which, if not sanctified, seems to have been condoned, by the usage of almost every country ; but where a man delivers a speech composed by somebody else, or professes to be the author of a book or other writing which is not his own, he perpetrates a fraud which it is difficult to excuse. There are respectable natives of Bengal, who have earned a cheap reputation by committing fraud of this description. Shrewd, well-informed Bengalees, of whom, however, the number is very small, are not misled by shams ; but Englishmen are very often deceived. Men have been known to get appointments upon the strength of literary productions not their own ; and even in the Legislative Councils men have been known to shine with borrowed lustre. It is not long, however, that a sham can exist undetected. If the literary cheat is foolish enough to write much or speak often, he is sure to be found out. The existence of ambitious fools throws upon the capable members of society, especially upon such as are of an obliging nature, a large amount of work in addition to their own. Kristo Das had been brought up in habits of strict, literary

honesty. His youthful exercises in speaking and writing may have been good or they may have been bad, but they were his. No journalist can impose upon people for any appreciable length of time, for a journalist has to write so much that his real merits as a writer cannot long remain concealed. Nor can a debater rely upon other men's eloquence or his own memory, for he cannot anticipate with precision the arguments which he will have to answer.

The manner in which Kristo Das Pal conducted his journal gave evidence not only of his versatility and habits of industry but also of intellectual powers of a very definite character. He was the only native of India who could make figures interesting; he was one of the very few natives of India who could master a complicated subject in all its details. The faculty of analysing, comparing and digesting, he possessed in a highly developed form. He was at his best, not so much in discussing general principles as in dealing with the details of a large measure. The quickness with which he mastered facts and discovered their bearing upon one another, the comprehensiveness of his survey, the readiness with which he took advantage of the weakness of his adversary, all marked out Kristo Das as a man of singular power and tact. The *a priori* style of argument he never cared to employ. The intellectual characteristics of Hurrish Chunder Mukerjee were somewhat different from those of Kristo Das Pal. Hurrish was steeped in the moral and political philosophy of Bentham

and had acquired his method,—“the method of detail” which breaks up a whole into parts, resolves the abstract into the concrete, dissects the meaning of words, phrases and formulæ, and makes them conform to the facts, relations and distinctions which exist in life and nature. The articles written in his happiest style were those in which he dealt with general principles of government, with the rights and duties of sovereign and subject, and of Zemindar and ryot, with the moral aspects of conquest and annexation, with the claims of individual liberty, with the despotism of influential persons or classes, and with the *rationale* of penal laws. Armed with the destructive weapons of Jeremy Bentham, and, for construction, furnished with the utilitarian principle and its deductions, he approached public questions in a consistent attitude and dealt with them in an effective way. His strength lay in the new revelation. His cast of thought was Benthamic. The faculty of Kristo Das was of a different order. His store of general principles was small; he had no philosophy at his back. Nor was there the same occasion in his day to discuss general principles as there was in the days of Hurrish. Some of the most important principles had been already established; and Her Majesty's Gracious Proclamation of 1858 marked the commencement of a new political era in India. Kristo Das was unequal to an abstract discussion; as a writer he was distinctly inferior to Hurrish Chunder; in dealing with a large mass of details, in handling practical schemes and measures and

systems, he was distinctly superior. If Hurrish was a jurist, Kristo Das was a practical statesman. Hurrish was mainly destructive, Kristo Das could not only demolish a political measure, but substitute one in its place.

As regards these intellectual characteristics Kristo Das stands absolutely unrivalled in Bengal. There have been good writers, good speakers, ingenious critics in Bengal; there have been lawyers, doctors, mathematicians, ascetics and devotees; but there has never been a man who has displayed, in anything like the same measure as Kristo Das, the power of mastering complicated systems of administration and voluminous documents dealing with details of political life. The industry which acquired facts and the memory which retained them were remarkable but were not exceptional; other men have employed those powers in other directions. An Anglo-Indian newspaper\* observed with perfect truth, though in an ungracious way, that Kristo Das "was never ashamed to be practical. The glorious past of Aryavarta, or the freedom awaiting her did not divert him from the commonplace details of the business, whatever it was, that he had in hand, and the paper which he conducted was consequently quite on a different footing from any other journal of its class in its treatment of public subjects. It was the same quality which secured him his success in private life as in public." Kristo Das

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\* *The Pioneer*, 25th July, 1884.

hardly ever wrote upon a subject unless he had acquainted himself with all its details and matured his judgment upon it. He was differently constituted from those journalists who are not staggered by want of information, and who can hammer out a single fact or idea into a long and rhetorical leading article. He had nothing in common with those youthful philosophers who, in their contributions to the vernacular magazines of Bengal, dismiss in a few lines whole systems of thought and summarily settle the gravest problems of life and mind.

While one is bound to admire the talent which enables a man to write a journal all by himself and to study difficult political topics, one cannot admit that the work of the journalist gives the most wholesome exercise to the mind. Work such as that of Kristo Das slowly kills the body and the mind; it is an enormous drain on the energies. It does not develop; it exhausts. It allows no leisure, and thus takes away one large class of opportunities for reflection and research. It ties the mind down to the topics of the day, however insignificant, and offers scant facilities for attending to subjects of permanent interest. The work of Kristo Das was especially arduous and fatiguing; but it is necessary to observe that all regular journalistic work tends ultimately to injure the higher faculties of the worker. Intellectually, the journalist lives from hand to mouth. He does not know to-day what he will write to-morrow, unless the topics of the day involve some great question of prin-

ciple. Each day brings its own work ; the day passes, and its questions are swept into oblivion. All journalistic work, therefore, is more or less of a desultory character. Results are not commensurate with labour. The journalist takes several days to read a Report ; he reviews it in a clever leading article. The article is admired. Next day the Report and the article are forgotten, and something else has to be written. In other words, there is great waste of power. What is the good of putting down the soundest ideas in the best language, if neither the ideas nor the language will arrest attention for more than a day ? An article, however good, cannot be published in one and the same newspaper from day to day or week to week ; nobody will read it more than once. Yet the article may contain truths good for all time, and may be more valuable than many a book which is to be found in men's libraries. To write a good leading article is to bury good thoughts and good language in an obscure corner and to abandon all chance of their resurrection. Therefore, there is very little incentive to exert one's highest powers to write an article for a newspaper ; if the powers are exercised, they are almost wasted. The mind has to skip from subject to subject and is not allowed to dwell permanently on the subject in which it is most interested. There is another evil. If the mind has already discharged its ideas upon a particular subject in one or two articles, there is nothing left to write upon that subject ; and yet the exigencies of journalism sometimes require that something should be written for



some length of time. A man cannot create ideas whenever he likes, and if he is compelled to write when he has nothing worth writing, his writing must be indifferent. The journalist, tied down to current topics, and compelled, at all risks and hazards, to write something upon some subjects in some fixed time, is subjected to a species of intellectual and moral deterioration which, though it may not be noticed by others, must be felt by himself if he is at all introspective. There are men, however, who are more interested in current topics than in anything else, and Kristo Das was probably one of such men. Unless he really liked his work he could not have persisted in it so long and done it so well. He threw himself into it with his whole might. His admirers may be inclined to regret that so much talent and industry should have been consumed by mere journalism, but when we remember that he himself enjoyed journalistic life and complained only of being overworked, we need hardly be sorry that he turned his energies in the direction he did. The *quantity* of work he had to do was too much for a single individual, but the *nature* of his work did not evidently appear unsuitable to him. Difference in quantity, however, is material. The work of an English journalist who simply guides, shapes and selects, may not be exhausting or demoralising, and may indeed be bracing. The English press is probably the best in the world. A great deal of admirable work is done, precisely because there are so many competent men to do it. The work

is well done, and the men are not killed ; but in India circumstances are different,

The distinguished career of Kristo Das Pal is a strange commentary on the judgment of unfitness pronounced upon him by Mr. Latour, District Judge of Twenty-four Perganas. Mr. Latour has been forgotten, or he is remembered only as the official who dismissed Kristo Das ; and the young man who was deemed incompetent to be a translator in Mr. Latour's Court lived to be one of the greatest men of the country. The memory of Kristo Das will be cherished not only by Indians but also by a large class of Englishmen. There is no reason to wonder, however, This is not the only instance illustrative of the irony of fate by which men rebuked for incompetence in early life have proved themselves to be men of rare gifts. It is not easy to read a human being correctly. Men whose ideas have been narrowed by the exclusive pursuit of some one kind of work are especially unfit to form true judgments of the intellectual worth of persons. The mere lawyer is apt to think that the best lawyers are the greatest of men, and that he who cannot construe a deed must be a fool. The bureaucrat takes familiarity with the office routine to be the true test of ability ; the writer sets store on powers of writing, the speaker on powers of speaking. The poet cannot excuse one who is not imaginative, the philosopher has no patience with one who is not reflective. The tendency of the average critic is to think well of no man who is not, in some way or other, an image of

the critic himself. It is only by a broad, liberal culture, a large experience of men and the world, and, above all, by a consciousness of his imperfections, that a man can take a correct view of types of intellect and character different from his own.

Intellectual powers like those of Kristo Das mature very slowly, are not developed by mere academic education, and are imperfectly tested by competitive examinations. Worldly experience and the world's work bring them out and develop them. They are of the nature of talent rather than genius. They work upon materials as they come and not upon a permanent stock of principles. Kristo Das mastered his subjects in the same way as a lawyer masters the facts of a case. He displayed great industry, method, and powers of reasoning. When his work was done he dismissed the facts from his memory. The minute which he wrote as a member of the Text-Book Committee, was the result not of any ideas permanently cherished, or any knowledge accumulated long ago, but of special preparation. When he was appointed a member of the Committee he took up his work as a lawyer takes up his brief. He studied his subject thoroughly and wrote an excellent minute upon it; but there is nothing to show that his interest in it was abiding and that he treasured up in his memory the conclusions at which he had arrived. The capacity of the mind to throw off something of its load whenever one pleases, is probably one of the essential elements of the temper of the journalist, the lawyer, and the statesman.

Too close an interest in any one subject, or in any particular group of facts, is an obstacle to the study of another subject and another group of facts. The motto of the practical man whose work changes from day to day is: "Sufficient unto the day is the work thereof." He must not brood too intently on the past, must not trouble himself with what might have been done, or what has been done and cannot be undone. He must take things as they come, and be content to "let the dead past bury its dead." One of the commonest exclamations of Kristo Das used to be: "Let by-gones be by-gones." He obviously acted in the spirit of that exclamation throughout his life; otherwise, he would not have been a successful journalist. The ability with which he opposed the Bengal Tenancy Bill, and the large amount of literature he wrote upon it, may lead one to think that he had made a life-long study of the relations, legal and other, of landlord and tenant. As a matter of fact he had not done so. He did indeed know a good deal of the land-laws of Bengal, but the largest portion of the facts and arguments with which he assailed the policy and the details of the Bengal Tenancy Bill was acquired and elaborated after the Bill had been launched. As a lawyer "reads up" his brief when the occasion arises, Kristo Das "read up" his political subjects as occasion arose. After he had finished reading, he was invulnerable. When the occasion passed away and a new occasion arrived, he "read up" the new subject.

Kristo Das might, by training, have been fitted to be a lawyer, but the work which he actually did, demanded several qualities and powers which lawyers do not always possess. His work was that of a statesman and a legislator, and he had a breadth of view, a love of progress, an appreciation of popular feeling and popular wants, which are seldom exhibited by any practising lawyers but those of the highest order. He was a more useful member of the Legislative Councils than several of those members who were professional lawyers. The fact is not to be wondered at. An explanation of it may be found in the following remarks of Edmund Burke: "It cannot escape observation, that when men are too much confined to professional and faculty habits, and, as it were, inveterate in the recurrent employment of that narrow circle, they are rather disabled than qualified for whatever depends on the knowledge of mankind, on experience in mixed affairs, on a comprehensive connected view of the various complicated external and internal interests which go to the formation of that multifarious thing called a state." The legislative incapacity of some eminent lawyers is thus noticed by Macaulay. "Their legal arguments are intellectual prodigies, abounding with the happiest analogies and the most refined distinctions. The principles of their arbitrary science being once admitted, the statute-book and the reports being once assumed as the foundations of reasoning, these men must be allowed to be perfect masters of logic. But

if a question arises as to the postulates on which their whole system rests, if they are called upon to vindicate the fundamental maxims of that system which they have passed their lives in studying, these very men often talk the language of savages or of children. Those who have listened to a man of this class in his own court, and who have witnessed the skill with which he analyses and digests a vast mass of evidence, or reconciles a crowd of precedents which at first sight seem contradictory, scarcely know him again when a few hours later, they hear him speak on the other<sup>1</sup> side of Westminster Hall in his capacity of legislator. They can scarcely believe that the paltry quirks which are faintly heard through a storm of coughing, and which do not impose on the plainest country gentleman, can proceed from the same sharp and vigorous intellect which had excited their admiration under the same roof, and on the same day."

Practice of an art tends to have a narrowing effect on the mind, and the tendency can only be resisted by a liberal course of study and by an intimate acquaintance with different modes of life and different phases of opinion. The assumptions upon which the rules of art are founded, require to be constantly tested, if the mind is to be saved from being purely mechanical in its operations. A liberal education and the practice of some particular art or arts, are, in a large number of cases, antagonistic mental exercises. A few minds of extraordinary powers may be equally skilled in mastering and exploring general principles, and in practically

applying rules ; but the law which applies to the largest portion of mankind seems to be this, that the minds which revel in general principles, which take extensive surveys, which examine and criticise things established, are not the minds which can excel in work of the mechanical sort, and conversely, the minds which have been trained to do work according to a routine, and which have never looked beyond a limited range, are apt to lose plasticity and to be unfit to deal with principles. The exigencies of social life demand that men should practise some art or other ; and one of the conditions of the intellectual and the moral progress of society is that men should receive some measure of liberal education. Liberal education and technical education are supplementary to each other ; they, to some extent, aid each other ; but let it not be forgotten that they mainly tend to conflict with each other. The processes of narrowing and enlarging must be essentially conflicting. Each man must determine for himself how much of each kind of education he should receive, and what special form of each he should acquire.

It is commonly said that intellectual work of an original character is not done in India because no man concentrates attention upon any particular subject, and every man fritters away his energy in a variety of pursuits. That little or no original work is done in India is true, but the fact is not to be explained merely by the unwise distribution of men's energies. In order that there may be original work in a country

it is necessary that there should be men of creative power, it is necessary that those men should master the existing knowledge in those departments of thought and learning which they hope to enrich, and lastly, it is necessary that the conditions of life in the country, and the private circumstances of the men, should be favourable to original thought and research. Mr. Sully in his essay on 'Genius and Precocity' observes :\* " Genius, as the etymology of the word suggests, is essentially a native quality. A truly great man is born such. This means that he is created with a strong and overmastering impulse to a definite form of origination. And hence he commonly gives a clear indication of this bent in the first years of life. On the other hand, actual production presupposes other conditions as well. It implies, for example, a certain amount of physical vigour, a possession which many a son of genius has had to do without in the early years of life. Not only so : production on any considerable scale requires opportunity and leisure. And here the external circumstances become a matter of importance, as serving to further or to delay the process of achievement. For though it may be true that in the end real genius proves itself irresistible in its instinctive striving towards creation, every reader of great men's biography knows that parental disapprobation, aided by the necessity of living, from which even the most gifted of mortals is not exempt, has in

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\* *Nineteenth Century*, June 1886.



a large number of instances greatly retarded the process of production and the attainment of distinction."

It is difficult to say whether creative geniuses are or are not born in India, but before men can discover, they must know all that has been discovered already, and it is certain that in India no men ever acquire such a complete knowledge of any subject. The prevailing system of education is not favourable to such acquisition. Lastly, the conditions of life in India are not favourable to original work. Specialisation of study is not the only thing wanting in India to lead to original work. In one sense we have great specialisation. One of the prevailing evils in this country is that, as a rule, lawyers know little besides law, physicians know little besides medicine. In other words, the tendency is for all education to be narrow, mechanical, one-sided. It is a mistake to suppose that to check versatility will necessarily promote thoroughness. There are, no doubt, men who kill originality by a multiplicity of pursuits; there are others who have no originality but are fitted to know something of a great many things; there are others again who can be original and versatile at the same time. Let us, therefore, by all means invite men to concentration of energy; but let us not delude ourselves into the belief that narrowness invariably leads to concentration. Superficiality is bad; but superficiality in many subjects is better than superficiality in a single subject. Most geniuses are not versatile; for preponderance of one faculty tends to dwarf the others. There is psy-

chological warrant, therefore, for the proposition that genius is to madness allied, for sanity means not only the possession of all human faculties in a certain measure, but a proper balancing of them, a harmonious working of them all. Versatile men very seldom do original work which deserves to be remembered. A man who is versatile is, from a certain point of view, unfortunate. He cannot tie himself down to a particular subject, and, unless he is a man of extraordinary gifts, cannot come to be regarded as an authority on any.

Judged by European standards, Kristo Das Pal's acquirements were small. What he could really boast of was not knowledge but critical power, not intellectual possession but a certain intellectual habit. The largest portion of his knowledge was political. He was well acquainted with the history of Indian legislation and administration; and he had a fair knowledge of English politics. In other words, he was fairly well equipped for his practical work as a journalist and as a member of the Legislative Councils; but he did not stand on the same intellectual level as the best educated Englishmen. He had no varied culture; he did not live a wholly intellectual life. In the lives of the great men of Europe, their correspondence occupies a prominent place. The letters that a man writes to his friends, illustrate his character, his views, his tastes, his habits of thought. They give us very often a more complete and accurate view of him than the work

which he transacts before the eyes of the world. Kristo Das's biographer would find it difficult to discover any letters which are worth publishing. Nearly all his letters relate to purely personal and private matters ; and what is true of him in this respect is probably true of every other Bengalee, however great. The concerns which are uppermost in the mind of the Bengalee, are the concerns of the existence of himself and of those in whom he is interested. Questions of literature, philosophy and science he may discuss on occasions ; political topics may, when they are fresh, slightly stimulate his energy ; but such questions and topics have no real hold of his mind. He puts them on and puts them off at his pleasure ; they are only a holiday costume. Kristo Das Pal was more absorbed in public life than any other Bengalee, but even *he* had not abandoned himself to politics. A man's letters show the range and depth of his interests. Kristo Das hardly ever felt himself called upon to write about politics in his letters ; and amongst Bengalees he could find few correspondents to whom political letters could be appropriately written. An educated Bengalee may *know* politics, philosophy, or science ; he does not *live* it.

Kristo Das had no systematic or organised view of life and nature. He had no Science, nor that unified knowledge called Philosophy. He took the world as he found it, and, apparently, never questioned the universe he was born into. Life and death, right and duty, mind and matter, and all the other solemn realities, were to him mere *data*, not problems to be

investigated. His cast of thought was not philosophical. He never wondered "This is I." He had not the penetrative glance of the poet or the prophet, not the searching spirit of the philosopher or the scientist; nor had he the knowledge and the training by which he could commence an independent study of the everlasting verities about him. Skilled in logical fence, fit to guide national counsels, deeply imbued with human sympathy, he yet lacked the ardour of the true student and worker, and never had a glimpse of the foundations on which rested his whole code of practical morality. He seems to have lived in perfect intellectual peace, untroubled by difficulties. He did not feel the "yearning of the pilgrim for his distant home," with which the reflective man "turns to the mystery from which he emerged." In practical life, Kristo Das was not found wanting. He dedicated his energies to the service of his countrymen, and he could have done no more; but the philosophical side of his nature was blank. He had none of the illuminating conceptions which a profound study of any one department of life or nature gives. Whether we study the mechanism of the heavens or examine the strata of the earth, whether we explore the laws of energy or observe the phenomena of life in its various phases, whether we dissect the laws and the languages of nations or compare their religions, we reach at last certain generalisations which shape our view of nature and determine our duties to men. One proof of the correctness of the conclusions

that have been reached in modern times, is, that different lines of inquiry have invariably converged to the same result. Kristo Das may have learnt some of the conclusions, but he does not appear to have been acquainted with the facts from which they had been obtained, or the methods by which they had been reached. There was no sympathy between him and Nature. He had no eye for her realms of light, no ear for her finer harmonies. Of Man, as of Nature, he took no philosophical view. The laws of social growth do not appear to have interested him. The history of ideas, the history of great movements, the procession of the ages, never had their proper charm for him. Direct practical concerns, the demands of the present and the near, fully occupied him. After all, it is no serious fault of Kristo Das's that he was not perfect. The ideal of perfection is easily conceived, never realised. India had need of a Kristo Das. In a country where the philosophical temper is apt to degenerate into moody self-consciousness and into every variety of religious mysticism, it is well to get a man of energy and thorough practical sense, whose subjective regards are feeble. Contemplation and action combined would be the end to strive for; but if we must do without one, we had rather be unphilosophically active than contemplatively inert. Here in India, therefore, defects like those of Kristo Das tend to increase, rather than impair, a man's usefulness; but we must not lower our ideal on grounds of expediency. Whatever type of character we may

regard as the heroic, this we shall always expect of our hero, that he should have taken a comprehensive view of Nature and Man, that he should have brought himself face to face with the realities of existence, that he should have reasoned out his convictions, and that he should have lived according to his convictions. Kristo Das was a highly intelligent, well trained, honest man of the world, who fought political battles with strength and boldness, but he never moved out of the narrow circle where he was so usefully employed. He never stood forth as a thinker. He had little of originality or brilliance or the spirit of the martyr. He had arrived at some sound maxims of conduct, but not through the medium of a sound philosophy. He realised, as has been pointed out already, the earnestness of life; he had not grown weary of it; but it is doubtful if he had fully appreciated the end of life to be WORK FOR ITS OWN SAKE. He had closed his *Byron*, NOT opened his *Goethe*.

## CHAPTER VII.

### POLITICAL IDEAS AND WORK.

Kristo Das Pal was a leader of public opinion in Bengal. The people, or the masses, have no opinion ; they are incapable of having any opinion. They are not discontented with the administration of the country ; nor are they pleased with it. Measures of Government they regard as the inevitable, irreversible decrees of Providence. They never inquire or argue ; they always submit. They have no consciousness of rights or duties, no consciousness of national existence. Their permanent attitude is one of helpless acquiescence in everything that is. Public opinion in this country, therefore, is the opinion, not of the whole people but only of the intelligent, the respectable, and the educated classes. Whoever leads these classes is the leader of public opinion. The educated classes, however, do not form a compact whole, for they have no bond of union. They are, to a large extent, disorganised by personal jealousy. Kristo Das Pal was not the leader of all the educated natives of India, nor yet of all the educated Bengalees. He was the recognised leader of the Zemindars and other landholders of Bengal. Several of these gentlemen were members of the British Indian Association. That is the oldest and the wealthiest Political Association in Bengal. There is no doubt that it is a thoroughly

compact body with definite aims. It has done a great deal of valuable work in the way of criticism, and among the reasons of its prosperity and usefulness are not only its respectability and the largeness of its funds, but its thorough solidarity and the unity of its purpose. Other Associations break up, or live languidly, because they lack cohesion. Their members have no common ends to attain, no strong personal interest in the object of their endeavours. The British Indian Association, on the contrary, whatever causes of jealousy or dissension there may have been in its internal working, has always been firm and united in at least one object, namely the protection of the Zemindari interests. It has consequently been better organised, and has had more vitality than most other associations. It must be admitted that it has displayed certain moral qualities the absence of which very often proves fatal to organised efforts in this country. In allowing Kristo Das Pal, a man of humble origin, to occupy a prominent place in its constitution, in consenting to follow his counsels, and in electing him as its representative in the Viceregal Council, the Association exhibited not only prudence and generosity but some of those higher virtues which are essential to successful self-government. Several associations, democratically constituted, have carried the democratic principle so far as not to acknowledge any leader. Jealousy, self-assertion, and a crotchety temperament, have stood in the way of combined action directed by the intelligence of one man; and they have consequently



been in the position of that very imperfect organism which wants a head. Other associations, again, have become merged, each in one individual. The name of an association is used to give weight to views entertained only by one individual. The British Indian Association has been the happy mean between these two extremes. Its constitution has been neither one of despotism nor one of democracy run mad.

Kristo Das Pal was fit to be a leader. Political leadership in this country demands certain qualifications which are seldom found combined in one individual. For some time past social leadership has been known in Bengal; for a longer time religious leadership has been known. Political life is new to the country; political leadership, therefore, is a very recent phenomenon. Two men seem to have been acknowledged as political leaders in Bengal, namely Ram Gopal Ghose and Kristo Das Pal. In order that a man may be a leader in this country, it is not enough that he should have intellectual and practical qualifications, that he should be a good speaker and writer, that he should have experience, that he should have sympathy with the people, that he should have done useful work. It is necessary also that he should have position and wealth, that he should be above a certain age, that he should have tact, that he should have influence with the officials. Intellectual and moral qualifications, tact and experience, are conditions of leadership in all countries. In India, wealth, position and official influence, are probably the most important condi-

tions ; and it is certain that a man guilty of the "atrocious crime of being young," even if he were a Pitt, would scarcely find a hundred persons in the country who would cheerfully recognise him as a leader. Ram Gopal Ghose was a man of wealth. Kristo Das Pal, though not known to be rich, was known to be a man of independent means and to possess great influence with men of wealth and with the men who constituted the Government. They both took a prominent part in public affairs; they were both good writers and speakers; they both possessed tact, the principal elements of which are the art of conciliation and the capacity of compromise; and, therefore, when they ceased to be young men, according to Indian ideas of youth, they came to be accepted as leaders. The Irishmen who flocked to the standard of Grattan or O'Connell, the Englishmen who rallied round the banners of Cobden and Bright, never cared to enquire if their leaders were rich or could secure appointments for them. In India, those would be the most important inquiries. The vital query about a man here is, not what he is, or does, or has done, but what money he possesses, what money he earns. The English are said to be a money-loving people, but even they have not carried the worship of wealth so far as the modern race of natives of India. If Kristo Das had been the editor of a journal representing the underfed "educated classes," and the secretary to an association representing the same classes, then with all his abilities, his experience, his zeal, and his public

services, he would not have been a leader. In a European country, the man who leads the poorest classes, the agriculturists and the artisans, would be one of the most conspicuous men in the country. In India the very "educated classes" would look with contempt on a representative who was not rich or influential.

Kristo Das Pal's regulated enthusiasm, and his indifference to new ideas, were among the causes of his popularity. In spite of appearances, there is no radicalism in Bengal, there is little of political enthusiasm. The enthusiastic speaker is applauded; the propounder of advanced doctrines of reform is admired for his courage and ingenuity. But the temper of the majority of men is despondent; their settled mode of thought mainly pessimistic; their sense of dependence on Government, and of their own weakness, too strong to be removed by animated appeals and brilliant forecasts. As soon as they get breathing time they feel they must moderate their ardour. The poverty of their homes stares them in the face and brings them back to a sense of submission to the inevitable. Therefore, new ideas have feeble hold of their minds, and their enthusiasm is short-lived; and a leader who keeps pace with them they are prepared to follow: all other leaders they renounce. Restless, adventurous, progressive races of the West, seek enthusiastic leaders; and some of them, like the French, are eager to grasp at new ideas. They are hopeful, even to desperation; their motto is Action, not Resignation. Here

in India, enthusiasm dies away with youth, and the leader who rudely disturbs the dormancy of people and seeks to put new ideas into their heads, overshoots his mark. Kristo Das Pal had learnt to lead men by following them.

Since the death of Kristo Das Pal, there has been no leader in Bengal. There are men of wealth and position; there are men of abilities and attainments, but there is no man in whom all the qualifications are united as they were in Kristo Das. Several men of wealth and position have not the necessary intellectual qualifications; several men of abilities have not a position high enough to make them leaders; some men who have position and ability take little interest in politics and do little work; some lack the necessary social virtues; and some are incapacitated for leadership by an imperious and uncompromising, or a fretful and vindictive temper. In every country there are foolish, spiteful, mischievous men. The real leader knows how to conciliate and manage even *these*. He must not stoop to quarrel with or to persecute contemptible adversaries. He must learn to bear contradiction, and must be magnanimous under all circumstances. He must not appear to be seeking leadership. If a man's devotion to public interests is discovered to proceed from love of self-aggrandisement, either as regards money or position, he fails to be a leader. Kristo Das made no violent or desperate efforts to thrust himself on the public notice. His work was of the quiet, regular, equable sort, and men had no reason to believe that

the energy which he displayed in public life was intended to secure his own advancement. He never volunteered to do any work which would give him notoriety. If by his efforts in speaking and writing he sought or was believed to seek, above all other things, his own personal prosperity, in the shape of wealth, official honours, or social influence, he could never have attained his position as a leader. The leader must grow. His growth will not be fostered but viewed with jealousy by others; such is human nature. If he makes sudden and violent movements they will rouse suspicion, and his progress will be arrested, but when in slow, silent, peaceful, and apparently natural ways he has grown to his full height, his position will be assured. People will accept his supremacy.

The remark is sometimes made that the Zemindars are the "natural leaders" of the people of Bengal. It is Englishmen who make the remark, and they would not make it if they knew the real state of things. It is the habit of Englishmen to institute analogies between the phenomena of their own country and those of other countries. No real analogy may exist, but they cannot understand and interpret foreign ideas and institutions except in terms of their own. They can very seldom open their minds and receive conceptions of a wholly alien character. They have the institution of the nobility in their country, and they fancy there must be some such institution in India. The Zemindars, like the nobility, hold lands; therefore, the Zemindars must be the nobility, the real

aristocracy of Bengal. But the noblemen of England have a very different history from the Zemindars of Bengal. Their legal rights are different; the modes of devolution of their titles and properties are different; their ranks are recruited in different ways; their education, enlightenment and social position are different. A large portion of the nobility of England has an ancient origin. The noblemen of the old feudal times not only held lands but did work, rendered service. They were men of wealth and position, valour and wisdom. The nobility are of different grades, each having its proper titles and insignia; they are recruited from the highest ranks of the clergy and the lay commonalty; and the law or custom of primogeniture has to a large extent prevented the division of estates and the extinction of great names. What is the history of the Bengal Zemindars? Let a historian\* of India answer. At the time of the Permanent Settlement "the Zemindar had some of the attributes which belong to a land-owner; he collected the rents of a particular district, he governed the cultivators of that district, lived in comparative splendour and his son succeeded him when he died. The Zemindars, therefore, it was inferred without delay, were the proprietors of the soil, the landed nobility and gentry of India. It was not considered that the Zemindars, though they collected the rents, did not keep them; but paid them all away, with a small deduction, to the Government. It was not considered

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\* James Mill.

that if they governed the ryots, and in many respects exercised over them despotic power, they did not govern them as tenants of theirs, holding their lands either at will or by contract under them. The possession of the ryot was an hereditary possession ; from which it was unlawful for the Zemindar to displace him : for every farthing which the Zemindar drew from the ryot, he was bound to account ; and it was only by fraud, if, out of all that he collected, he retained an *anna* more than the small proportion which, as pay for the collection, he was permitted to receive.

“There was an opportunity in India to which the history of the world presents not a parallel. Next after the sovereign, the immediate cultivators had, by far, the greatest portion of interest in the soil. For the rights (such as they were) of the Zemindars, a complete compensation might have easily been made. The generous resolution was adopted, of sacrificing to the improvement of the country the proprietary rights of the sovereign. The motives to improvement which property gives, and of which the power was so justly appreciated, might have been bestowed upon those upon whom they would have operated with a force incomparably greater than that with which they could operate upon any other class of men : they might have been bestowed upon those from whom alone, in every country, the principal improvements in agriculture must be derived, the immediate cultivators of the soil. And a measure worthy to be ranked among

the noblest that ever were taken for the improvement of any country, might have helped to compensate the people of India for the miseries of that misgovernment which they had so long endured. But the legislators were English aristocrats; and aristocratical prejudices prevailed."

The Zemindars with whom the Permanent Settlement was made, were an aristocracy manufactured by Lord Cornwallis. They were entirely the creatures of the state. They were the recipients of a favour which they had done nothing to deserve. The Permanent Settlement has been of great benefit to Bengal. There are several parts of India where the introduction of that system is eagerly solicited, and no one in Bengal would like to see it cancelled or in any way encroached upon. But what is essential to observe is that it has given us no real aristocracy, except in so far as owners of land must be an aristocracy. An aristocracy increases in dignity with age. An hereditary aristocracy has especial charms. In Bengal, estates are liable to be broken up or wholly lost, not only by the folly or the extravagance of their owners, but by the endless partition among heirs, to which, under the Hindu law, they may be subject. They are also liable to be mismanaged and to lose in value when they pass into the hands of infants or women. Except four or five families, there is nothing like an hereditary aristocracy in Bengal. Nor is there any settled or sensible mode of recruitment. A shop-keeper or a money-lender by purchasing some



quantity of land does not become a member of the aristocracy. Except the newly invented titles of Maharaja, Raja, Nawab, and the like, there are no names or titles by which sections of the so-called aristocracy of Bengal may be classified and designated. There are several families in Bengal which profess to be aristocratic because they have wealth, or the new titles, or both, but their founders, the men who by their intelligence, energy and self-sacrifice, built up fortunes for the benefit of their indolent descendants, never pretended to be aristocrats. It is difficult to say when or how a man becomes an aristocrat. An English nobleman belongs to a recognised class with a distinctive name; but who is to label or identify the nobility of Bengal? When a successful lawyer in England is raised to the peerage as the Lord Chancellor, one knows that he is enrolled in the aristocracy, but at what stage of distinction the Indian lawyer enters the hallowed precincts of the aristocracy, who can tell? At what stage does a distinguished merchant become an aristocrat like the petty Zemindar? The fact is, we have no aristocracy in British India, unless we call by that name the ever-changing, un-historic class composed of wealthy men of all grades and descriptions.

Whether there is or is not any aristocracy in this country, it is certain that the Zemindars, as a class, do not lead the people. The educated people lead themselves and do not acknowledge the authority of the Zemindars; nor do the ryots recognise them as

leaders. The fact of a man's receiving rent from some people cannot give him leadership. Rent is received in consequence of a right which the Zemindar possesses ; it is not, however, the exercise of *rights* over the ryots, but the performance of *duties* to them, which would make them love and respect their landlord. The Zemindars, if they will learn their duties to the ryots, if they will acquire the capacity of performing those duties, and if they will actually perform those duties, will certainly be the leaders of the people. Wealth has always a great charm in the eyes of the people. And if to wealth and position are added intellectual merit, a loving disposition, and sympathetic conduct, the Zemindars will have unbounded influence over their ryots. The Zemindars must protect the ryots ; not fight them. In the parts of the country which they own, they should establish schools, hospitals and dispensaries ; cut down jungle, dig wells and tanks, construct roads ; in times of flood or famine or outbreak of disease, they should render every help and, if possible, relieve and encourage the distressed by acts of personal kindness and courtesy. The people of India are grateful for every little service they receive. Their affection is easily won. The Zemindars, instead of attempting to secure popularity which is so cheaply purchased, are ever insisting on their rights. By all means let them attend to rights. If they do not receive their lawful rents, they, instead of their tenants, become objects of sympathy ; but they must not attend *solely* to

rights. They have a right to receive rents, to enhance rents, to eject tenants under certain conditions which the law prescribes; they have a right to ask the Government to maintain the Permanent Settlement; but have they not duties also? Not only the duties whose performance the law compels, but moral duties to the ryots, to the country? No man had more influence with the Zemindars than Kristo Das Pal; and it must for ever remain a matter of regret that though he gave them efficient help in securing their rights, he hardly ever called their attention to their duties. Week after week he conducted an agitation directed to the strict observance by the Government, of the Permanent Settlement and of the rights of the Zemindars. But in his writings we look in vain for any such exhortation to the Zemindars as the following: "The Government has divested itself of its proprietary rights in the soil of the country and given them, not to the ryots but to you. Therefore, upon you has devolved the duty of improving the land and raising the people. Maintain your rights, but your duties are even more important than your rights. It is the performance of your duties which alone can justify the Permanent Settlement and your position as the leaders of the people." Kristo Das Pal habitually insisted that there should be good feeling between landlords and tenants, and resisted all measures of Government which were calculated to provoke bitterness. But good feeling may be attained in two ways; either by each party doing its duty to

the other, or by the inferior party being kept ignorant of its rights and the superior party taking advantage of the ignorance. The difference is great between the happy friendship which springs from the due discharge of reciprocal duties, and the contentment which results from ignorance of a better lot. The mere fact of ryots not making a complaint is no proof of their happiness. The contentment of the slave does not sanctify slavery.

The Zemindars of Bengal have hardly done their duties to themselves. Very few of them have cared to educate themselves, to develop all that is best and noblest in their nature. Their wealth and their leisure give them especial facilities for acquiring a high degree of culture ; but they almost invariably neglect their opportunities. The English nobility stand on a much higher intellectual level. There are, no doubt, some English noblemen who have no claim to distinction beyond wealth and a great, historic name ; there are others whose distinction has been the cause, not the effect, of their elevation to the peerage ; there are others again whose merits are high as their pedigree is long. The Indian aristocrat fancies he has no higher duty than to enjoy life in complacent indolence and to maintain and augment the wealth he possesses. He is not learned himself, nor is he a patron of learning. He hardly understands what it is to make a sacrifice for a public cause. He has not a single bright or original idea to which he clings with persistence and which he is prepared to carry out. He ignores the responsibilities of wealth. Noblemen and other men

of wealth and position are the patrons and munificent supporters of most of the public institutions in England. The country is covered with monuments of their charity and public spirit. Learning finds its encouragement from them. In India the situation is different. Our aristocrats think that the Government, and not they, must do everything for the country. Kristo Das Pal could have taught them to know better; but he did not teach them.

Every rule has its exceptions; and it is but fair to acknowledge that there has grown up in recent years a class of Zemindars who have far other ideas of their duties towards ryots than the traditional ideas of extorting money and doing no work. They are moved by sympathy; they have public spirit and generosity; they value culture, and some of them have received it. All this is matter for congratulation; but a great deal yet remains to be done in the way of making the Zemindars and other aristocrats realise their duties.

Kristo Das Pal's political work does not stand forth in visible shape. But if the guidance of public opinion, and the vigilant and efficient criticism of public measures, have any value, he did valuable work. Such work is not generally esteemed; it does not attract men's attention or excite their fancy; but all careful students of the lives of men and nations must acknowledge the importance of work which is critical rather than constructive, and whose results are subtle and impalpable rather than concrete and tangible. Two great principles have to be recognised.

To guide public opinion, to prepare it for a particular action, is at least as valuable work as the action itself. And the avoidance of evil is no less valuable work than the accomplishment of good. After opinion has been matured, action comes in the ordinary course of things. Men who teach principles do more important work than the men who apply rules founded upon those principles. The men who have most profoundly influenced the destinies of the world are its religious teachers, for they have inculcated the widest principles to which all action may be referred. A single religious doctrine, a single philosophical idea, a single scientific discovery, has more pervasive and far-reaching consequences than cartloads of legislative enactments. Similarly, the formation of public opinion and the preparation of it for the acceptance of a political measure, are even more valuable work than the actual passing of the measure. When opinion is ripe, people are apt to take it as natural, to regard its opposite as absurd, and to forget the silent, determined, long-continued efforts by which the opinion had been developed. It is only right that those efforts should be duly recognised. In the next place, negative work has value like the positive; the avoidance of error is as essential as the seizure of truth. It is on this principle that prevention is better than cure. To live healthily, one has not only to select good food but to reject the bad. Personal security means the avoidance of danger rather than deliverance from actual distress. All kinds

of work, intellectual and practical, demand not only that certain things should be done, but that certain other things should be consciously abstained from. Moral life consists not only in the pursuit of good aims but in resisting temptations to evil. Everywhere the negative is of as much importance as the positive. He who warns us against danger does us as good service as he who confers on us a positive blessing. The critic who stands by and points out to the legislator the snares and pitfalls he has to avoid, is no less useful than the legislator himself.

It is true there exists no crystallised product of the talents of Kristo Das Pal. Men who strive for immortality leave behind them some visible embodiment of their thought, some solid material construction, some organised institution which bears their name. Kristo Das does not seem to have consciously aimed at immortality; yet he was ambitious and partially realised his ambition. He has left that part of the world where he was born better than he found it. He lived only forty-five years, and during half that period there was scarcely a single considerable measure of legislation or administration in India, on which he did not leave his mark. The history of his life is the history of his times. He brought his mind to bear on the discussion of every topic of importance and invariably threw light on obscure points, discovered errors and made wise suggestions. Being only a native of India and not an English official he

could not initiate measures. His services were required only for consultation, and these were as valuable as any that could be rendered. He not only helped the Government; he helped the public. If there is public spirit in Bengal to-day, if there is an educated public opinion, if there is efficient journalism, if there is vigorous criticism, Kristo Das had no small share in bringing these into existence.

Kristo Das Pal was a thoroughly loyal subject. In all his discussions and criticisms, the permanence and the safety of the British rule were insisted on as fundamental points never to be ignored. Most truly he was called one of the "Pillars of the Empire." The Government could not have had an abler critic, nor a stancher friend. Every native of India who has acquired political influence among his countrymen has been remarkable for his appreciation of the benefits of English rule. Such appreciation is of the essence of loyalty. It is well to bear this in mind, for the native press of India, and Indian agitators for reform, are sometimes spoken of as *disloyal*, because, forsooth, they condemn with some degree of warmth the illegal acts of Anglo-Indian officials, resent the personal ill-treatment of Indians by Europeans, and press the claims of natives of India to the appointments which they are qualified to fill. Loyalty does not mean the recognition of the English as the dominant caste in India; it does not mean the submission of individual natives of India to individual Englishmen; but it means allegiance



to the authority of the English Government, and respect for the law. In that sense the natives of India have been steadily loyal, though large numbers of English residents in India have been occasionally seditious. A disloyal people takes advantage of the embarrassments of the Government, and deepens the crisis in which it may be placed ; but the native Indian subjects of Her Majesty have, on all occasions of crisis, exhibited their devotion to her rule in a manner that cannot be mistaken. The Indian Mutiny is sometimes referred to by careless or interested observers as evidence of Indian disloyalty ; but the state of the country during the Mutiny proves with remarkable clearness the deep and abiding attachment of the Indian people to the English Crown. The *Times* wrote in July 1857 : " From all sides we are assured that the general population has exhibited rather good will than hostility towards us, and in many cases effectual protection has been afforded to fugitives from Delhi and other scenes of mutiny." A writer in the *Edinburgh Review* for April 1858, remarked : " Nothing has been more remarkable than the fact, that throughout its whole progress it has faithfully retained the character of a military revolt. It has involved the whole Native Bengal Army ; it has spread to the Northern contingents ; it has reached some Bombay regiments ; it has touched the Nizam's Army ; it has threatened the Madras army, but except in the newly annexed State of Oude, it has not been taken up by the po-

pulation. Now it is this circumstance which has saved India to England. If, as at the Sicilian Vespers, the whole population of India with its tens of millions, had at the first signal of resistance risen against the English, our rule in India might perhaps, by great exertions and large expenditure, have been recovered, but we should only have recovered a population watching the next favorable opportunity for revolt, and have re-established an empire on sand. It was the general good will of the population which rendered the suppression of the military mutiny both practicable and beneficial."

On a very recent occasion there were fresh proofs of the loyalty of the people. In the earlier part of Lord Dufferin's administration there was a chance of a collision between Russia and England on the Afghan frontier. The attitude of the people of India on that occasion was thus described by the *Times*. "Since we have been threatened with a quarrel with Russia we have received the most gratifying evidence of the loyalty alike of the princes and the people of India. Offers of assistance from the Native States, offers of money from wealthy individuals, and universal assurances that England's quarrel is India's quarrel have poured in upon Lord Dufferin . . . . The attitude of the native Press is not less deserving of notice than that of the native princes. Outspoken and even violent as it sometimes is in advocating administrative changes, it has behaved in view of the present danger exactly as a patriotic

opposition behaves at home. It has laid aside—and that by publicly declared consent, with reason given—the discussion of irritating topics, and is eager to repel the accusation that its pursuit of internal reforms, however zealous, in any way involves disloyalty to British rule. Suspicious people will, no doubt, shake their heads, and refuse to be comforted by these manifestations, but competent observers on the spot have no doubt that they are genuine. Suspicion is not, after all, the alpha and omega of statesmanship, nor need we look very far for solid motives of self-interest which may render Indian loyalty to us, as against any external foe, a thing credible and natural.”

It is perfectly true that self-interest and gratitude constitute by far the strongest grounds of Indian loyalty. English rule is, on the whole, vastly better than anything that preceded it; no other foreign rule can be equal to it; and the sudden transfer of it to any indigenous power would be a great public calamity. The educated people are more loyal than the uneducated, because they can better appreciate the blessings of English rule; they are also more critical than the uneducated, because they have higher ideals of good government. Educated sons of India have learnt to venerate the “spirit of the British law which makes liberty commensurate with and inseparable from British soil,” understanding, by “British soil,” not only the soil of England but of England’s possessions. To them, as to Englishmen, England is a name unequalled in the greatness and the glory of its historic associations.

But they cannot, for that reason, perpetually sing odes to the beatific character of English administration. The duties of life are much too serious to allow a perennial display of tenderness or veneration. In political life it is more necessary to observe defects than praise merits. Progress is accomplished not by adulation but by criticism. The habit of criticism displayed by the educated native of this country is an imitation of the English habit; and imitation is the sincerest flattery. His aspirations are cast in an English mould; even his cant is an echo of the English cant. The better educated an Indian is, the stronger and more intelligent is his admiration of the English character and English methods of government; and it is worthy of note that all the more considerable leaders of public opinion in India,—Hurrish Chunder Mukerjea and Kristo Das Pal, Sir T. Madhava Rao and Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji—have been among the warmest admirers of English rule.

It is hardly necessary to discuss in detail the topics which most occupy the attention of the natives of India who seek political reform. Ample justice has been done to those topics in two recent treatises, Mr. H. J. S. Cotton's *New India*, and Mr. W. S. Blunt's *Ideas About India*. They are mainly the following:—

1. Non-interference and Economy.
2. The gradual substitution of Indian for European official agency.

3. The development of representative institutions, and, in particular, the reconstitution of the Legislative Councils on a representative basis.

4. The extension and improvement of the existing educational system.

5. The development of industrial life.

6. The extended employment of natives of India in the Army and the concession to them of the privilege of Volunteering.

As regards non-interference it is necessary to observe that the country does not habitually suffer from the evils of over-legislation. It is only occasionally that an inclination to interfere in a mischievous way is exhibited, and it is on those occasions alone that the cry of non-interference is raised.

Governments often profess a desire to effect economy; but economy is hardly ever practised except by the abolition of certain offices and the curtailment of certain salaries. Under such a system of retrenchment the men who generally suffer are natives of India. There are, however, wiser methods of effecting economy than by meddling with salaries. Efficiency of the public service has a definite relation to the number of servants employed and the amount of salaries given to them. There are, no doubt, superfluous and overpaid offices; but it is not to these that the shears are applied, nor, if they were applied, would the result be considerable. The departments in which economy could be most usefully effected are the Army and the Public Works; and yet, singularly enough, these are the

departments which have been invariably excluded from the operation of all schemes of retrenchment, and which have been absorbing more and more of public money.

With regard to the extension of the educational system and the development of industrial life, a great deal remains to be done; but there is no cause of despondency, for Government itself very often manifests interest in these subjects. At the present moment the main topics of agitation are the increased employment of natives of India in the civil and military services, the concession to natives of India of the privilege of bearing arms as volunteers, and the development of representative institutions. These are the demands of educated India; and they are fair and legitimate, in view of the principles and policy which England has so often declared, and has attempted in a large measure to carry out. To refuse to natives of India the privilege of bearing arms is to cast a slur on their loyalty, to perpetuate their demoralisation which has resulted from disuse of arms, and to deprive them of the opportunity of rebutting the charge of imbecility and cowardice which is so often laid against them. Justice and economy alike demand that the children of the soil should be more largely employed than they have been in the civil as well as the military service of the country. They ask for no favour, but seek only to be treated according to their deserts. They hold the English people and the English Government bound by pledges solemnly made. Among those pledges are the following :

"That no native of the said territories [India] nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Government." [Act 3 & 4. Will IV. c. 85. s. 87]

"We hold ourselves bound to the Natives of our Indian Territories by the same obligations of Duty which bind us to all our other Subjects; and those obligations by the Blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil . . . . And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our Subjects, of whatever Race or Creed, be freely and impartially admitted to Offices in our Service, the Duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge." [Proclamation by the Queen in Council to the Princes, Chiefs and people of India. Published by the Governor-General at Allahabad, 1st November 1858.]

It is but natural that violations or attempts at violation of these promises should be viewed with alarm by natives of India. Attempts at violation are made whenever it is suggested that a certain portion of appointments in the Covenanted Civil Service should be reserved either for Englishmen or for natives of India, or that some of the uncovenanted appointments should be reserved for certain sects or races, and, indeed, whenever it is said, explicitly or by implication, that race, or religion, or residence in a particular province should constitute to any extent, however small, either

a qualification or a disqualification for appointments. Such attempts have been made from time to time.

Kristo Das Pal's political programme included the topics here referred to. The subject of representative institutions had not assumed the same importance in his day that it has since ; nor had the subject of volunteering come prominently into public notice. Upon all the other subjects his ideas were as definite and mature as those of the best informed critics and agitators of the present day. But his practical schemes hinged on no system of political principles. He was in possession of no generalised truths ; he had not assimilated the ideas of the most advanced thinkers. Therefore, though his discussion of political topics was practically useful, and though he valued progress, he had not that ardour, that confidence, and that definiteness of view, which mastery of principles gives. For instance, he does not seem to have distinguished the conditions which must regulate legislation in stationary countries like India from those which determine legislation in progressive countries like England. A passage in Sir Henry Maine's *Ancient Law* throws light upon the point : "With respect to progressive societies it may be laid down that social necessities and social opinion are always more or less in advance of Law." Law performs different functions in stationary and in progressive countries. Where the people are progressive, Law attempts to overtake public opinion ; new laws are demanded by changing opinion and social exigencies. In a stationary country Law must be an agent of



progress and not a mere register of progress. It must be ahead of public opinion, and must lead it. In a progressive country, it is sufficient condemnation of a law that it is not wanted by the people, for legislation serves the formal purpose of recognising popular opinion and giving effect to it by authoritative commands. In stationary countries Law has to be aggressive and to advance society by an external impetus, without, however, disturbing Order. This is a distinction which it is especially necessary to observe in India. Almost the whole of the criticism which is directed against progressive legislation in India may be summed up in the following questions: "Who wanted the law? What practical exigency will it remove?" These questions are very often irrelevant. In a country like India, people would never complain, though they might be on the brink of ruin. Opinion does not change; wants never arise, or are never felt. After the legislature has removed wants, people discover that wants existed. The Englishman values the right to vote, and demands it; the native of India must be taught to value the right by being given it. In England, institutions are the expression of the ideas of the people; in India institutions have to be created in order that they might suggest ideas to the people. In backward countries the main value of liberal institutions is their value as an educating agency. The analogy of legislation may be carried into other departments of life. In England, public meetings and, in fact, every sort of political agitation, are the result of

popular feeling ; in India they are conducted by a few advanced men to evoke and to educate popular feeling.

Kristo Das Pal, though he recognised the poverty of the Indian people and discovered a remedy in the development of industry, had scarcely realised the true nature of the situation. The causes of the poverty are many. It is not necessary to make an attempt to enumerate them, but they may be classified under three heads. 1°. The acts of the English Government. 2°. The acts and the habits of the people. 3°. The operation of natural laws. Kristo Das Pal took very elaborate notice of the first group of causes, inadequate notice of the second, and no notice of the third. His occupation was mainly critical, and he did not fail to comment on such actions of the English Government as the incurring of extravagant expenditure on the army, the public works and the services ; the imposition of heavy taxes and rents ; the reckless exportation of grain ; the repealing of import duties on cotton goods ; the burdening of India with the expenses of wars undertaken by England for her own imperial purposes. He also bestowed some attention on those causes of poverty for which the people themselves were responsible, such as indolent habits, and an absence of organisation and adventure ; the injudicious use of capital ; reckless multiplication of the race. But deeper than all these causes are the social laws, working spontaneously and unobserved, in accordance with which an inferior race inevitably decays when brought into contact with a superior race, and ends

either by being extinct, or being absorbed in the superior race, or being reduced to an extremely poor and degraded condition. De Tocqueville has drawn an admirable picture\* of the fate which has overtaken the Negro and the Red Indian after they were brought into political contact with the White man in America. That is a picture which one can hardly look at without emotion ; and it is impossible to reproduce it here. The analogy is not very great between the condition of the Negroes and the Red Indians on the one hand and that of the poverty-stricken masses of India on the other ; but there are a few faint lines of resemblance, and the following passages may have interest.

“ When the Indians were the sole inhabitants of the wilds from whence they have since been expelled, their wants were few. Their arms were of their own manufacture, their only drink was the water of the brook, and their clothes consisted of the skins of animals, whose flesh furnished them with food.

“ The Europeans introduced amongst the savages of North America fire-arms, ardent spirits, and iron : they taught them to exchange for manufactured stuffs, the rough garments which had previously satisfied their untutored simplicity. Having acquired new tastes, without the arts by which they could be gratified, the Indians were obliged to have recourse to the workmanship of the Whites ; but in return for their productions

\* See *Democracy In America*. Vol. I. Ch. XVIII.

the savage had nothing to offer except the rich furs which still abounded in his woods. Hence the chase became necessary, not merely to provide for his subsistence, but in order to procure the only objects of barter which he could furnish to Europe. Whilst the wants of the natives were thus increasing, their resources continued to diminish."

"Properly speaking, therefore, it is not the Europeans who drive away the native inhabitants of America; it is famine which compels them to recede; a happy distinction which had escaped the casuists of former times, and for which we are indebted to modern discovery!"

Here are a few faint lines of resemblance. The Negro and the Red Indian have been ruined not only by competition with the European, but also by harsh, tyrannical laws, and by brutal conduct in the shape of direct, forcible expulsion. In India laws are generous, and Government is humane, but the process of natural selection goes on; and nothing has been done by the Government or the people to avert its consequences. The people are more intellectual, and can assimilate European civilisation more readily than the Negro and the Red Indian; and, therefore, they have fared better. Nevertheless, national poverty in India is serious, and it is the result of causes which have operated in America. The wants of the natives are increasing; their resources are diminishing. Indigenous industry is well nigh extinguished. The people mainly depend on agriculture; and a single untoward season brings famine and death.

Government and agriculturists very nearly exhaust the population of the country. Traces of native prosperity are to be found in a few small classes,—the salaried classes, the professional men, and, in provinces where there is the Permanent Settlement, the Zemindars. These are the few small oases in the vast desert of Indian poverty. The English official, planter, or trader on the one hand, and the famished, squalid peasant, the overworked, down-trodden coolie on the other, very nearly complete the picture of Indian economic life. The whole nation cannot be a nation of Zemindars or clerks, lawyers or doctors. Industry is the mainstay of a civilised people, and there is no industry in India. The old Indian industry has perished in competition with European, and none has grown up in its place. The machines of Europe, the superior energy and organisation, and the larger capital of the Europeans, have driven out of the field the Indian artisan. The circumstances of the country are such that the agriculturist has very little chance of developing into the artisan. The facilities for enhancement of rent are great and there is no maximum limit of enhancement. The ryot, therefore, has little motive to improve his land, and he can save nothing which may serve as capital for industrial operations. The capitalists of the country have seldom invested their capital in industrial enterprise, and have exhibited little capacity for acting in partnership. Kristo Das Pal, if he had taken an adequate view of the economic situation and traced it to its causes, would have written differently about

Zemindars and ryots from what he actually wrote, and would have attached more importance than he did attach to the development of industrial life.

To view with unconcern the decadence of a nation, on the ground that it illustrates the natural law of the Survival of the Fittest, may be scientific but is inhuman. The largest portion of the work of human beings consists in resisting some of the operations of nature, in adapting nature to the conditions of human existence. Life and happiness imply an adaptation of man to nature and nature to man, not a surrender to those forces or tendencies of nature which are injurious to man. Human beings construct one kind of arrangements to be able to live comfortably in a warm climate, another kind to live in a cold climate. They seek to remove the pangs of disease, to rescue fellowmen from danger and distress. The statesman, the physician, the engineer, the navigator, the cultivator, the artisan, are all employed in what may be called metaphorically a process of subduing Nature. Nature never is actually subdued; her uniformities are independent of the control of man. Nevertheless, human beings are perpetually attempting to secure existence and happiness, not by inaction, not by submitting to be played on, like the rock or the tree, by forces of nature, but by voluntary efforts directed to that adaptation which makes existence and happiness possible. The fact is, Man is a part of Nature; but as he is endowed with intelligence, will, and moral feeling, he has to be active and not, like the rest of nature, passive and mecha-

nical. He has to act with a purpose, and the purpose of the civilised man is human happiness. Experience has shown that the state of nature is not the happiest state. Civilisation has been a continuing struggle with nature, that is, a conscious transformation of natural conditions in order to secure the greatest amount of human happiness. It is true, human beings cannot disturb the sequences of nature. But it is also true that Progress consists in utilising the sequences of Nature to secure the happiness of Man. It is not only proper but imperative to seek human welfare by voluntary effort. The sequences of nature determine the kind and direction of effort; they are not themselves rules of conduct, or ends of life. One of the sequences of nature is the survival of the fittest. If there is a struggle at all between the fit and the unfit, the fit survive and are bound to survive. 'Fit' is a relative term, and means 'fit to live under given conditions;' 'fittest' means 'most fit to live under given conditions.' 'The fittest survive,' in the literal sense of the words, is a verbal proposition. Survival follows from fitness; and fitness means the capacity to survive. But there is a sense in which there is real predication in the proposition 'The fittest survive.' The proposition implies that there is a struggle in nature. That there is a struggle one cannot know *a priori*, in the same way as one can know that if there is a struggle the more fit will beat the less fit. As a matter of fact, a struggle does go on. When the struggle goes on between masses of

men, it should not be viewed with indifference. To allow the weak to die when they can be saved, is wrong; and it is not only wrong but foolish to kill the strong and allow the weak alone to live. The only thing that can be done is to put a stop to the struggle and to separate the combatants; the next step is to give the weaker party more fitness than it has. In this way the standard of fitness goes on rising until *ultimately* the world is so overcrowded that a struggle becomes unavoidable. But, as a matter of fact, long before the final catastrophe is reached, the strong prey upon the weak. In war, conquest and annexation, there is deliberate exertion of force. In industrial life, no force is consciously exerted. But as soon as the struggle in such life is noticed, it becomes the duty of men in power to protect the weaker party, as a provisional arrangement, and to impart to it strength. The decayed industry of India can be renovated only by the joint action of the Government, the capitalists, and the people who are fit to be the labouring classes. What particular modes of action are to be adopted, it is impossible to state here in detail. The labouring classes will be easily found. Government also is alive to its responsibilities. Indian administrators like Lord Ripon, Lord Dufferin and Lord Reay have exhibited the warmest interest in the development of industrial life, and there are reasons to believe that definite schemes will soon be framed and carried into execution. But native capitalists, such as the landed "aristocracy" of Bengal, have hardly yet awakened to a sense of their duties.



Not being furnished with any definite body of principles, Kristo Das Pal had no ideas to suggest about the remodelling of the entire system of Indian administration. Except the suggestion made by Mr. John Bright, several years ago, that India could only be governed by being broken up into a number of divisions, Kristo Das Pal had hardly any idea which reached down to first principles. The remarkable chapter of *New India*, entitled "Political Reconstruction" is, after all, the outcome of a Philosophy. Kristo Das Pal had no definite ideas of Reconstruction, for he had no Philosophy. He imperfectly realised the growing difficulties of Indian administration, and the difficulties in the way of the development of an Indian nationality. The difficulties are great even in the way of a thorough *political* solidarity of all India. Sooner or later, some of Mr. Cotton's suggestions will have to be accepted. The absence of a common religion and of common blood, is one of India's standing difficulties, and it is impossible to discard for ever the idea of segregating some of the races and sects which inhabit this country. The English language, the railway, and common political rights and duties, have gone far and will go further in promoting unity; but it is doubtful if by themselves they will ever be sufficient to substitute complete order for the present chaos.

Kristo Das Pal's indifference to the most generalised Ideas, deepens the analogy of his character with the English. The English, as a nation, have seldom exhibited an appreciation of great Ideas. Several of

their institutions are embodiments of noble ideas, but the institutions were created not because they embodied those ideas but because they would meet some pressing practical emergency. Liberty of the press is a great idea, but it is not as an idea that it came to be recognised. The House of Commons condemned the Licensing Act, not on the great question of principle, not as a thing essentially evil, "but on account of the petty grievances, the exactions, the jobs, the commercial restrictions, the domiciliary visits which were incidental to it." Great causes have been won in England, solely on grounds of practical expediency, and they have been won not always by statesman and thinkers, but very often by insignificant and even contemptible characters. The repeal of the Licensing Act is associated not with the arguments of the *Areopagitica*, but with the title-page of a pamphlet entitled "King William and Queen Mary, *Conquerors*" which Blount wrote and Bohun licensed. "Wilkes was a worthless profligate; but he had a remarkable faculty of enlisting popular sympathy on his side; and by a singular irony of fortune he became in the end the chief instrument in bringing about three of the greatest advances which our Constitution has made."\* The English people, if they are fetish-worshippers at all, worship more fetishes than one. They sometimes fall flat at the feet of Liberty; sometimes they burn incense at the altar of Coercion. They invite other nations to worship Liberty consistently, but they cannot

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\* Green's *History of the English People*. Vol. iv. p. 221.

ignore the majesty of Coercion even when Mr. Gladstone addresses them thus: "I ask that we should practise what we have so often preached, in our own case with firm and fearless hand, the doctrine which we have so often inculcated upon others—namely, that the concession of local self-government is not the way to sap or impair but the way to strengthen and consolidate unity." These are matters remote from Indian politics, but they illustrate the temper of the English people. Kristo Das Pal understood them thoroughly, and, in addressing the English official, seldom employed any arguments but those which had reference to immediate utility; but there can be no doubt that he would have enhanced his usefulness by closer attention to first principles than he thought fit to give them. His speech delivered in the Legislative Council of India, on the 9th of March 1883, on the "Ilbert Bill," touches general principles, and though it produced no immediate practical effect, it is destined to have more permanent value than any other speech which he made. The exigencies of the hour pass away, but the interests of Truth and Liberty endure for ever. We are apt to boast, in this century, of our superior enlightenment, our toleration of every kind of opinion and belief, our readiness to accept truth wherever found; but we know by experience that the most sacred causes are not exempt from danger to-day. And it is as true now as it was in Milton's day that thousands of ages may have occasion to regret the loss of a neglected truth for which whole nations fare the worse.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### IN THE HOME AND IN SOCIETY.

IT was lucky for Kristo Das Pal that he was not a member of a huge joint family. The jarring interests, the tumult, the commotion, the squabbles,—petty and serious—of that miscellaneous conglomeration of human beings called a Hindoo joint family, are fatal to peaceful living and to sustained thought and work. Kristo Das Pal was a member of a joint family, but it was not so large, nor composed of so heterogeneous elements, as to interfere seriously with his peace of mind or his work. Yet he had no rest. From early morning till a late hour in the evening, he had to receive visitors, most of whom wanted some favour. Latterly he had acquired the art of writing his articles and doing other work in the presence of his visitors and while talking to them. If he had thought of waiting till his visitors had left him, he would have had to wait for ever. The afternoons he used to spend in the rooms of the British Indian Association. Even there the visitors pursued him. A great deal of his work had to be postponed from day-time to night-time, and he hardly ever went to bed before one or two in the morning. Bengali society recognises no definite hours of visiting. If any Bengali gentleman, however high his position, gave the world to understand that he would receive visitors only at certain hours and not at others, his countrymen of

Bengal would be highly incensed and never forgive him. Visitors reserve to themselves the liberty of visiting at any hour they please. And how long their visits are! Sometimes, the visits are real visitations. The visitor does not discover that he is making himself a bore, that he is wasting valuable time, but persists in talking or in sitting, until fatigue or his own business makes him shift his position. No Bengali had to receive such a large number of visitors as Kristo Das Pal; and one can only regret that he was so much annoyed and was compelled to work beyond time. An Englishman will find life unbearable under such conditions; will absolutely refuse to submit to them; but a Bengalee must have great powers of endurance. In the end, even the Bengalee has to pay the penalty for unlimited sociability, for the laws of health refuse to adapt themselves to the idiosyncrasies of Bengali society.

The annoyance and the worry to which a Bengali is subjected in his home are, very often, fatal to his success in any work which demands tranquillity of soul and steady industry. The "sweet home" of a Bengali is, in the largest number of cases, a source of endless distraction and embarrassment. If the walls within which talent and genius have had to live and work, could be questioned, what a tale they would tell! What a shedding of tears they have witnessed, what sighs of grief and despair they have heard! What scenes they have seen, of hearts lacerated and nerves paralysed, of struggles baffled and renewed and baffled again, of the unwilling surrender of heroic souls to the

overpowering forces of domestic misery ! The Hindu home has crushed many a spark of native fire, buried many a noble project. Poverty is not the worst of its destructive agencies ; but the agitation of feeling caused by the living together of a large number of men and women, very few of whom are in sympathy with each other, and almost every one of whom has some grievance as against the rest, cannot fail to deaden the energies. The quarrels of women, the deep-seated malice of men, the " mighty contests " which " rise from trivial things," give no rest to the unfortunate inmate of the Hindu home. The fight rages sometimes about a point of dignity, sometimes about money, sometimes about questions of authority and obedience. Occasionally of course, there is intermission of active hostilities ; but no more peaceful condition is ordinarily reached than that of armed neutrality.

Kristo Das Pal's was, apparently, a tranquil home. At any rate it was tranquil so far as he was concerned ; he was not disturbed. There must have been annoyance from time to time, and many a time his feelings must have been harrowed, but nothing serious is known to have occurred. So far as is publicly known, questions of casuistry never arose in his home, but it is precisely such questions which occasion trouble to the Hindu. The questions are forced upon a man by his relations. He is told : " If you have any respect for me, or, if you have any affection for me, you must do such and such a thing to such and such a person ; " and yet the doing of the thing may be cruel and immoral.

Kristo Das Pal's relations were apparently not so inconsiderate as to place him in such a situation; and he therefore went on smoothly. Yet in his home he was not free from anxiety. Every home has its cares and responsibilities, and they are felt with peculiar keenness by the man who is sanguine, who is over-cautious, and who is rich in the feelings of tenderness. Such a man finds occasion of anxiety everywhere and at all times. Kristo Das Pal could hardly separate himself from his home for a single day without a pang. If business or the demands of health took him away from Calcutta even for a short time, he would insist on being written to every day about the state of affairs in his home. On one occasion he had taken a short holiday and retired to a quiet place at some distance from Calcutta, where he used to receive letters every day from his son. One day no letter came. He immediately made up his mind to go back to Calcutta, and left the place the same day. The slightest ailment of a child filled him with anxiety and even drew tears from him. A mind so tender, so sensitive, could hardly stand rude shocks, and the loss of those near about his heart must have given him wounds that could not heal. He lost two of his children by his first wife, to whom he had been married in 1856; and the wife herself died in 1872. Of his children only a son and a daughter survived him. By his second wife, to whom he was married in 1874, and who is now his widow, he had a son who died an infant. The bereavement might not appear serious to all men, but

he could hardly bear it. He referred to it in the following manner in a letter addressed to Mr. Lethbridge (now Sir Roper Lethbridge): "God has smitten me sorely, and I must try to be resigned, but can feel no further interest in life; and shall not live long." There is something in this, at least as touching as in Burke's lament over the death of his promising son: "The storm has gone over me; and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honours, I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth! . . . I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate." But Burke lost a son "who in all the points in which personal merit could be viewed, . . . would not have shewn himself inferior" to any of his ancestors. Kristo Das, consecrating with tears the memory of an infant, and left prostrate by its death, is a holier spectacle than one is ordinarily permitted to see in this utilitarian age.

There are men who would regard as weakness such an excess of tenderness. But the view which condemns intensity of affection as a weakness, assumes an ideal of life which it is difficult to admire. The man that has no music in his soul has been held capable of committing the grossest crimes. And of the man that cannot laugh, the "whole life is already a treason and a stragem," says Carlyle. But the man that cannot weep, is a blacker character than either of these. He is not human. Sorrow is the great sanctuary of the human soul. Not the sorrow of the saint, not the penance of the ascetic,



but real human sympathy. The European, living a political life, reserves a large portion of his sympathy for the State, for society; the Hindu is concerned in little beyond his home, and there his affection, in its most concentrated form, is bestowed upon its proper objects. The European ought not to be called hard-hearted, if, instead of attending exclusively to his home, he devotes so much of his feelings, energies and resources to the support of the state, to the discharge of his duties to society; nor ought the Hindu to be called selfish, for though he very imperfectly realises his duties as a citizen he exhibits a high order of virtues in his home. The virtues of the European and the Hindu are complementary. The indifference of the Hindu to his public duties is one of the chief defects of his character, but if he has a redeeming feature it is his kindliness of feeling manifested in the home. Various causes, however, have been tending to alter the Hindu character; new wants and increasing poverty have been taking away the sweetness of life; and homes overcrowded with spiteful, money-loving men and women, have been losing the radiant cheerfulness of olden times.

Kristo Das Pal lived a simple life. His wants were few; his habits unaffected. Indeed, one may almost regret that his wants were so few; and many of his friends will be disposed to admit that his style of living was not altogether suited to his position. The scale of his expenses might very well have been raised without in any way interfering with his ideal of plain, unostentatious living, and without dis-

regarding the demands of economy. In the long run he might have been a gainer, for health depends upon good living, and no expense would have been too great to secure a longer lease of life than he had. But it would be wrong to imagine that he deliberately elected to live low, and sacrificed health and comfort to a love of money. Ideas of comfort vary; and there is every reason to believe that the ideas which Kristo Das had, were realised by his mode of life. From his earliest years he had been brought up in an ascetic style which had apparently deadened his sensibility to the pleasures of Art and to the higher comforts of life. His innate goodness and the active play of his feelings prevented him from lapsing into cynicism.

A Hindu home, even when quiet and not torn asunder by discord, never attains the highest form of happiness. A home which is composed entirely of uneducated people has the merit of being homogeneous; but it is unrefined. It sometimes happens, however, that a Hindu family residing in a single home consists of one or two individuals who are advanced in ideas and tastes, while the other members are several centuries behindhand, intellectually and morally. It thus comes to pass that parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, are sometimes removed from each other in thought and feeling by zones and centuries. In a home composed of such elements, the ordinary pleasures of life are, with tact and forbearance, attainable; but the happiness which springs from intelligent companionship can never be hoped for. There are no

mothers who can direct the education of children and form their character ; no wives who can be the intelligent and helpful associates of their cultivated husbands. Nor is the number large of the *men* who are prepared to order their lives on principles of sympathy and good will.

Kristo Das had sweetness and light. Of sweetness especially, he had more than a common share. He was kind and courteous to all, even to menial servants. No man was ever repulsed from his door, or heard from him an unkind word, even in the midst of the busiest of his occupations and the sorest of his trials. In his home he was never tyrannical, in society he was never disagreeable. If he possessed authority, he neither stretched it, nor exercised it in its full measure. Like Englishmen and unlike Bengalis, he had the art of enjoying power and not seeking constant opportunities of its exercise. He was so mindful of his *duties* that he never cared to insist on his personal *rights* as against friend, relation or subordinate. Therefore he was not a pest to his subordinates, nor a bore to his friends and colleagues. He was not self-assertive and dogmatic, and would not threaten to resign if his counsel were not followed. He was respectful to seniors and was not jealous of juniors. In Bengal, intelligent and educated young men are viewed, very often, not with kindly feelings, but with jealousy, by their elders. Their advance in life is not helped but obstructed by their own countrymen who are placed high. Men of distinction seem to think their laurels so insecure that

they cannot have the magnanimity to take a young man by the hand and help him on. They are in a chronic state of nervousness, and, instead of welcoming clever young men as their friends, assistants, disciples and intellectual successors, put every obstacle in their way. The greater the cleverness of a youth, the more is the jealousy he will excite. If he gets any assistance at all, it will be from Englishmen and not from his own countrymen. Kristo Das Pal was above all such jealousy. He was quick to discern merit and to help young men to the best of his power. In his youthful days his own progress in life had been viewed with jealousy and resisted; and his bitter experience, instead of souring his nature, had only intensified his sympathetic impulses. Adversity chastens the good, embitters the perverse. The number of persons who are willing to help struggling merit is diminishing every day. Kristo Das Pal had received valuable help in his youth. If he had to begin life now, he would scarcely be as fortunate. One may, in these days, occasionally see a man living like an old oak, stately but decayed, giving shelter to the way-worn traveller and bracing his energies; but the spectacle is becoming rarer day by day. The country may soon be denuded of everything that can cast a shadow or afford a shelter, and the journey of life may have to be performed amid no more soothing associations than a fierce sun overhead, a scorching wind around, and hot, arid sands beneath.

In a country where the jealousy is so great between the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the

successful and the struggling, there can hardly exist a class the members of which are united by sympathy. If a rich man is jealous of a poor man, he will be even more jealous of another rich man. If a successful man has no pity for one who is struggling, he can hardly have sympathy with one who is prosperous. Educated men will not combine, because every one of them is jealous of every other. The highest form of friendship is unknown. Mill, Cairnes and Fawcett were warm friends. If there were three distinguished Economists in Bengal, they would fly at each other's throat, for each would be jealous of the distinction of the others. That there are exceptions to this rule is shown by the lives of such men as Kristo Das Pal. He was one of the few Bengalis who could work in concert with others, and who could make others work together. In the absence of such a guiding spirit, the only bond of union among the people is a common grievance. When the rights of a class are threatened, it begins to feel and act as one man. In one sense, therefore, reactionary governors have done even more good to the country than progressive and generous rulers. They have evoked unity among the men who were the victims of a common grievance. For the same reason, abuse hurled at natives of India, has, in the long run, been more beneficial than compliments gracefully showered on them.

Kristo Das Pal had a large circle of friends. His kind, sympathetic, unassuming nature and his high position secured him more friends than a Bengali is

ordinarily fortunate enough to get. There were several men who professed to be his friends in order to secure his favours, and there were several others who made the honest mistake of supposing that they were his friends and equals because they had been kindly spoken to or written to. Kristo Das had great powers of conversation, but though he was genial and lively, he contrived to maintain some degree of reserve with regard to the more important matters, especially those of a personal nature. He was intimate with very few. Not more than three or four men knew the details of his private life, and had looked into his heart and soul. His distinction could not fail to excite jealousy in some people, though they seldom exhibited active malice, probably because it would be powerless to do him harm. He never made a display of puritanism but lived a purer and more rigid life than many a man who professes to have dedicated himself to religion. If he had been less stoical he would have been more popular than he was in Bengali society. The coarser pleasures of life seem to be especially well adapted to develop sympathy among those who participate in them. Kristo Das was remarkable not only for purity, in the ordinary sense of the word, but for honesty also. Honesty in the small affairs of life is not such a common virtue that one should get no credit for it. There is an appreciable number of men belonging to the respectable and prosperous classes of society, who constantly talk of patriotism, social reform, moral courage, first cause, and such other high topics, but who will

not pay their debts, though they have the means to pay, and who will even resort to shabby tricks for the purpose of denying the debts. Newspapers, Associations, and Committees appointed for raising subscriptions for particular purposes, are systematically cheated by some men who would be supposed incapable of any kind of meanness. In the widest sense of the word 'pure,' Kristo Das's life was of the purest. And his virtue was not merely of the negative sort, but was largely identified with active beneficence. He gave relief, to the best of his power, to needy and distressed individuals, and also helped the public through such organised institutions of charity as the District Charitable Society of Calcutta.

In the conduct of his journal Kristo Das was thoroughly honest. As "no Government could ever buy his eloquence," so no private party, however aggrieved, could hire his advocacy. There are reasons to believe, however, that in his palmiest days, high officials were sometimes extremely anxious to secure his support of particular measures, and it is probable that, in consequence, his criticism was less trenchant than it might otherwise have been. But such moderation of tone, resulting from what may be called official pressure, had not the least tinge of dishonesty. On the contrary, being in possession of the official explanation of official measures, he was able to assume a more judicial attitude in the discussion of them than other journalists were able to do. Because he might be receiving private communications from officials, suspicious people were

constantly guessing that he had lost, or was prepared to lose, his independence. Yet there is not a single instance to show that from personal motives he made a surrender of his conscience. Kristo Das Pal mixed in Anglo-Indian society, but not intimately. He never dined with Europeans, and never cared for closer social intercourse than being in their company and conversing with them. He attached great value to such intercourse and used to describe it as an attempt "to bridge the gulf" between the Hindoo and the European. He was pleased with such an attempt whenever it was made. No doubt, all efforts to promote mutual good feeling by social intercourse should be encouraged, but experience shows that they cannot go very far. The English, who have very little adaptability, will not mix on equal terms with men who are wholly oriental in their ways; nor will they tolerate the equality sought by men who are anglicised. They cannot forget they are conquerors. The difficulties in the way of free social intercourse have been set forth with admirable clearness and accuracy by Mr. Cotton and Mr. Blunt, and it is not necessary to state them over again here. Kristo Das Pal was satisfied with very little. He thought it was enough if Englishmen and Indians could and occasionally meet in a drawing-room and converse with each other.

The life of Kristo Das Pal illustrates the mode in which the institution of caste operates in the present day. He belonged to a very low caste called *telee*. The result of his membership of that caste was that



in spite of his education, in spite of his exalted and influential position, he could not sit down to dinner with members, however insignificant, poor and debased, of any of the superior castes, such as the *Brakmin* or *Kayesth*. Nor could he be married into any family belonging to a caste different from his own. The Viceroy of India might have no objection to dine with him, but a poor *Brakmin* or *Kayesth* earning eight or ten rupees a month as a cook, *sircar*, or clerk, could never bring himself down so low as to dine with Hon'ble Kristo Das Pal, or to marry a member of his family. Whatever the philosophical defence of caste may be, and whatever good it may have done in ancient times, any man that has observed it in its actual operation in the India of to-day, will be reluctant to dispute the truth of Sir Henry Maine's judgment that caste is "the most disastrous and blighting of all human institutions." The economic advantages of division of labour, the educational advantages of confining particular classes, through generations, to particular occupations, have been vastly over-weighed by the disadvantages incident to the institution. In fact, no advantages are visible at all. Trade and industry have decayed; and no progress has been made for centuries in any arts, useful or elegant. On the other hand, the growth of nationality has been checked, joint enterprise has been rendered difficult, manual labour has been viewed with contempt by large classes sunk in poverty, and,—in accordance with inexorable laws of nature,—deterioration of physique, intellect and

character has resulted from the fact of men and women being compelled to marry within certain narrow circles, namely the castes or classes to which they belong. No immediate remedy may be available. The institution of caste cannot be suddenly swept away; and if it could be, the sudden and forcible removal would be no unmixed good. Caste will exist. But it ought to be gradually modified, and opinion must be prepared for its progressive modification. It is one thing to tolerate an evil as a necessary evil, and quite another thing to defend it as a blessing. The life of Kristo Das Pal proves that talent and character are not the monopoly of the higher castes, that it is possible for a man of low caste to command the respect and sympathy of the whole country, and to be a qualified and approved representative of all classes, and that the Hindu community is in no way benefited by a rigid and eternal separation of castes from each other. The institution of caste now centres, not in any trade or occupation, but in Eating and Marrying. A man loses caste by eating with, or being connected by marriage with, people of another caste. So also a man may lose caste if he eats food prohibited by the Hindu *shastras* or cooked by un-Hindu hands, or plies a calling which for him is ignoble; but the latter case scarcely ever happens. A change of the law or custom governing Marriage would now be premature and probably lead to a disturbance of Order. The most natural and harmless modification of Caste would be to relax rules of Eating. No man should be

punished by society for eating whatever he likes and with whomsoever he likes. Large numbers of Hindus eat prohibited meat privately; let the private practice be publicly sanctioned, Kristo Das Pal held very liberal views of social questions. He was in favour of Hindu social reform, provided it was cautious and peaceful, and one of the main reasons why he valued English education, was that it would open men's eyes to the social evils which existed. Hurriish Chunder Mukerjee was more outspoken than Kristo Das, and in an article which he wrote in 1857, described polygamy, the enforced celibacy of widows, and "other abominations," as "evils that were eating into the very core of social morals and happiness." Such a description would be considered unpatriotic by the disingenuous champions of Hinduism, whose ingenuity is equal to the defence of the grossest absurdities. Kristo Das Pal lived a Hindu life, but clearly saw the evils of the regime which had devitalised Hindu society.

## CHAPTER IX.

### VIEWS ON RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

Mr. James Rgutledge, in the excellent letter previously referred to, describes in the following terms the religious attitude of Kristo Das Pal: "He met the Missionaries on a principle as simple as that on which he met the Government. He claimed for them the utmost freedom. He demanded from them that they should use no undue influences; that they should not coerce, and should not buy converts. Grant him these conditions, and the devoted Jesuit and the devoted Presbyterian were alike his friends. Deny him these conditions, and he had for the man who bought converts the most resolute, the most unflinching and the most redoubtable opposition. . . . Everybody had justice and fair play from this noble Hindu . . . His own faith he allowed no man to interfere with. He was a Hindu of Hindus. To say that he worshipped images would be absurd. No intelligent and educated Hindu does that, at any rate in these times. That he worshipped God I know, though what idea exactly he associated with the term, I do not know, and I shall not lament much if I never do. I am writing of a beautiful human soul, high above meanness of every kind, incapable of evasion, scornful of subterfuge, capable of any self-sacrifice, reckless of any consequences to himself when he stood for the right.

To apologise for such a man that his faith was not this or that, would be to cast on his memory a dishonour which never shall be cast on it by me."

Mr. Rontledge is right. In fact, one wonders, how, being an Englishman, he could so thoroughly appreciate the position of a Hindu. Very few Englishmen understand the religious situation of the educated Hindu; and even natives of India have sometimes wholly misconceived the true state of mind of a man like Kristo Das Pal. In the first place, Hindus are generally regarded as a species of fetishists who worship stocks and stones and clay images, believing them to be supreme powers; and the few Hindus who openly renounce what is called 'idolatry,' and preach a crusade against it, are looked upon as select spirits who are ahead of their countrymen. Jeremy Bentham came out of his seclusion to shake hands with Raja Ram Mohun Roy, because the Raja had discarded the thirty-three millions of gods worshipped by his countrymen;\* and at the present moment Mr. Keshub Chunder Sen is believed by a large number of Englishmen to have similarly emerged into twilight, leaving the Hindus to grope in utter darkness. Yet there can be no greater error than to suppose that Hindus are mere 'fetishists,' and that educated Hindus are real idolaters because they keep up, or allow to be kept up, the old Hindu style of worship. No sensible Hindu is an idolater, except in a very special sense. It is not merely that

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\* See Prof. Max Müller's *Biographical Essays*.

English education has shaken the faith in images, but idolatry, properly so called, never existed except among the lowest and most unintelligent classes. Hinduism is as full of pure spirituality as any other supernatural religion, and there have been known *pundits* whose creed is more rationalistic than idolatrous. If the intelligent Hindu practises some of the forms and ceremonies which appear to be idolatrous, he is careful to attach to symbols and material appliances their true meaning. If no religion can be independent of material appliances and associations, the Hindu is not to blame if he has more of them than votaries of other religions ; and a cultivated Hindu like Kristo Das Pal in no way compromises his conscience or belies his education if he tolerates forms which, judged by a rationalistic standard, may appear to be of no consequence.

Idolatry has various forms and phases. The worship of the *idola* of Bacon is a species of idolatry, and he is a rare individual who has not bent the knee to any of those *idola*. There are other idols, in a more material sense. Dr. Martineau in one of his sermons refers to various species of modern idolatry. He describes "the Philosopher's idol, shaped and set up by the intellect unsanctified by conscience;" the Artist's idol, "portrayed upon the wall of Nature with the pencil of beauty, and reflecting a flush of loveliness over Heaven and Earth," "yet how often betrayed into passionate license and mere peevishness;" "the Stoic's idol, chiselled by austere conscience from the granite masses of spiritual strength," "yet

wanting the mellowing of pity and the grace of sweet and glad affections;" and "the Woman's idol, with Madonna look, captivating to gentler minds," yet "enfesbling the severe healthfulness of duty, and merging the struggling heroisms of this life in the glorified saintliness of another." The Dean of St. Paul's, in one of his recent sermons,\* dwells at length upon three prevailing forms of modern idolatry, namely, first, the idolatry of physical agencies,—the idolatry of Science; second, the idolatry of Literature; third, the idolatry of Art, the worship of beauty. Idolatry is very tenacious, for it has its roots in some of the tendencies of human nature. Hero-worship itself is a species of idolatry; and hero- orship, as Carlyle shows, has wonderful vitality.

The superstitions of Hinduism seem to be the most powerful causes of the revolt from it. No doubt, Hinduism is overloaded with superstition; and yet the absolute avoidance of superstition is only another name for Rationalism. From another point of view, there is, as Bacon says, a superstition in avoiding superstition. The roots of superstition are laid deep in human nature. It is hopeless to struggle against the necessities to which man is fixed down by his corporeal existence. As man is not all spirit, he has to submit to rules about forms, ceremonies, behaviour; these rules, systematised, are custom. Custom is the soldering material of society. The fabric will not stand without

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\* See the *London Spectator* of May 28, 1887.

it. In the nature of things, a great deal of custom is arbitrary, and, if it is not mischievous, there is no use exchanging it for some other custom which is equally arbitrary and not more beneficial. To regulate the transactions of life upon purely rational or spiritual principles, would be possible if human beings were incorporeal and the earth at least as light as ether. Marriage is a spiritual tie. Yet because it is human beings that are tied, they have to appear in certain clothes and not others; the priest has to appear in certain clothes and not others; a lamp has to be lighted if the room is dark; words have to be uttered. To secure solemnity, certain paraphernalia have to be displayed. Clothes, lamp, and similar other accessories are not spiritual phenomena. Therefore, there can be no eternal and universal rules about them; and each sect must be held free to contrive its own rules.

The writer in *Pillars of the Empire* observes: "Almost the only eminent Hindu of whom the English public have lately heard is the religious reformer who many years ago threw off the trammels of caste altogether, and, as the chief of the Brahmists, came over to England to preach Theism. Babu Keshub Chunder Sen, however, is a far less important personage among the natives of Calcutta and Bengal than his countryman [Kristo Das Pal] who is the subject of the present notice." Whatever may be the relative importance of the two men, it is certain that the English public have vastly over-rated some of the religious teachers of India and have not taken adequate notice



of practical workers like Kristo Das Pal. The originator of a religious doctrine or system does, no doubt, exercise an influence immensely greater than that of the political leader, but in India the field of supernatural religion is pre-occupied. The so-called religious teachers of modern India are only renovators of old doctrines or commentators on them. It is sometimes said that as religion determines character, and as character determines action, the work of the religious teacher is in the last resort the most valuable practical work, and ought to have precedence of all such work as mere intellectual education. It is also said that in a country like India social evils have played such a mischievous part, that no political reform of any importance will be possible until society has been mended. The problems to be dealt with in India are so complex, that one is not surprised to observe diversity of opinion as to the manner in which the problems are to be approached. Somebody seeks to begin with a religious revolution, somebody wants moral teaching, somebody is satisfied with the education given in schools and colleges, somebody demands political training; all sensible men demand some kind of stir, and the only question which elicits a variety of opinion is, Where shall the work begin? The fact is, it is impossible to fix upon one kind of work as the all-important work and to neglect everything else. The interdependence of the various kinds of work, of the various activities of the human mind, of the various modes of life, is very seldom kept in view. Not only

religion determines character, but character determines religion; not only morals stimulate the intellect, but the intellect gives rationality to morals; social institutions are not only the cause but the effect of the character of a people; the political life of a people is not only the result of its moral character and its social condition, but reacts upon the morality and the social habits of the people. All are dependent on each, and each on all.

The fallacy which has the most plausibility is, that to change the religion of a country is to change its character, its social life, its political aspirations; and hence the reformer of a people that is degraded, must direct his efforts mainly to the reform of its religion. It is forgotten that religion itself, to be deep-rooted, widespread, and permanent among a people, must *grow* among the people and cannot be engrafted on it by extraneous effort any more than character can be engrafted. Change the religion, and you change the intellectual bent and the moral life of a nation. But *how* change the religion, unless you have previously so educated the intellect and character of the nation as to make it fit to receive that religion? Religion propagated by the sword, does *not* change character. "Christianity triumphed not so much by superseding rival faiths as by absorbing and transforming them."\* If it is true that religion shapes character, it is equally true that it is only a noble character which will *receive*

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\* *Rationalism in Europe*. By W. E. H. Lecky. Vol. I. p. 211.

a noble religion; and not until character has been changed, not until intellectual convictions have been remodelled, will a new religion find its way into the mind. Similarly, it is not only true that a reformed society will regenerate political life, it is also true that improved political life will wither the morbid growths of society. Man is, at one and the same time, an intellectual being, a moral being, a social being, a political being, a religious being. The different parts of his nature act upon each other. The exigencies of life often demand that the process of education or reform must commence in some parts and not in all, and obviously, the only method feasible in such cases is to begin with the most elementary education, the education of the intellect. It so happens that religion is the most complex fact of man's nature, the last result of the evolution of his spiritual self. If even the savage has a religion, it is as true in his case as in the case of the civilised man that religion is the product and not the parent of his intellectual convictions. Reform by voluntary effort cannot override the laws of development; it can only aid that natural process. And the reformer who, following nature, seeks to work up from simple facts to complex, is more likely to succeed than he who works down from complex facts to simple.

Kristo Das Pal believed in Education as an agent of progress. He was a stout and zealous champion of high education which, in India, is imparted through the medium of the English language. There have

been occasions when the policy of education, inaugurated by Bentinck and Macaulay, has been seriously threatened, when the Educational Charter of 1854\* has been regarded as an embodiment of fallacies. On all such occasions Kristo Das has been the determined, uncompromising defender of high education, of English education. Consistency and gratitude demanded that he should be a defender. He could not condemn a system to which he was so largely indebted; nor could he overlook the benefits it had conferred and might confer on thousands of his countrymen. The *Saturday Review* observed with perfect truth: "Such men as Romesh Chunder Mitter, C.J., and Kristo Das Paul fully justify the anticipations of Lord William Bentinck, Macaulay, Cameron, Dr. Duff, and Trevelyan in the battle waged more than forty years ago." It is gratifying to observe how largely those anticipations have been realised. Lord Macaulay, in his famous Minute, dated February 2, 1835, wrote: "In one point I fully agree with the gentlemen to whose general views I am opposed. I feel with them, that it is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour,

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\* See Sir Roper Lethbridge's Treatise: "High Education In India. A Plan for the State Colleges." (W. H. Allen & Co., London, 1882.)

but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population."

The policy of Lord Mayo as Governor-General of India, and of Sir George Campbell as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, was to encourage primary education at the expense of higher education. To this policy Kristo Das Pal was opposed, and rightly. On *a priori* grounds, it might seem to be the natural course to give priority to primary education, but experience shows that higher education is not only of more intellectual and practical importance, but prepares the way for primary education. The men who receive high education are a support to the Government and a light to the country, and may be expected to bear on their own shoulders some portion of the burden of primary education. English education has done good work in this country, but greater results are expected from it in course of time; and it is certain that the time has not come for Government to withdraw its support from the system it has so long maintained. Doubts have sometimes been expressed about the beneficial character of the ultimate tendency and the results of English education, and it is not reasonable to expect that the products of English education would be viewed with kindly feelings by officials consi-

tive to criticism and jealous of Indian political aspirations. But Englishmen who have been intimately connected with the system of higher education in India and have closely watched it in its practical operation bear testimony to its good results. Men like Sir Henry Maine, Sir Roper Lethbridge and Professor Wordsworth, are warm in their appreciation of the benefits of English education, though they are not blind to the defects of the existing system. Even distant observers like Professor Seeley and Mr. Slagg, view the system with similar feelings. Educated natives of India will, of course, be thoroughly loyal to a system which has made them what they are, which is bound up with their intellectual constitution, and which controls, or ought to control, every step they take.

It is the fashion in certain quarters to talk lightly of modern knowledge, because, it is said, ancient books and manuscripts have been discovered which contain the pith and marrow of those ideas, principles and laws which are believed to be the most valuable products of modern research. And there have been men to argue that if not the details, at any rate the leading principles, the architectonic conceptions, of modern philosophy and science, are to be found in old Sanskrit works, and that a study of these works would supply as useful information and give as good a discipline to the mind as it is possible for modern works to give. This sort of reasoning rests upon assumptions which are altogether false. There can be no doubt that the knowledge and thought of modern times are more highly organised

than the knowledge and thought of ancient times. There is a better appreciation of evidence in modern times. It is easy to discover epigrams, *dicta*, and conundrums in ancient Hindoo books, stating or suggesting that society is an organism, that the true rule of conduct is utilitarian, that the mind has a relation to the physical organism, that the people of a country are its true sovereign, that physical forces are correlated, that matter and force are indestructible. But not a single ancient book argues out any of these conclusions, adduces or examines the evidence in their favour, in anything like the same logical, systematic, elaborate way that a clever school-boy of modern times may command. It is not results alone, but methods that are valuable. There is a difference between inspiration, guess, or *ex cathedra* judgment, and proved truth. Modern works are richer than the ancient in results as well as methods. Modern knowledge is superior to ancient, not only as being larger in quantity, but as being more accurate, better reasoned out, verified and systematized. The theory of Evolution had been dimly anticipated in at least one of the systems of Indian Philosophy,\* but that system does not contain as much evidence in support of the theory, as is to be found in a single page of a modern treatise. Modern knowledge must be conveyed to the minds of learners through a modern tongue. The reasons which justify the adoption of

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\* See the article on Evolution, by Mr. Sully, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. (Ninth Edition.)

the English language as a medium of instruction in India, are not of an abstract and universal character, but of an historical and political character. The vernaculars of India will be altogether inadequate for the purposes of higher teaching.

Equally erroneous is it to argue that because the English is to natives of India a foreign tongue, the cultivation of it will anglicise them, and interfere with their development as a nation, destroying ideas and habits which it cannot replace. The intellectual and moral results of an education depend on the nature of the education, on the substance of the knowledge imparted and on the kind of method taught, and not on the language in which the teaching is effected. Truth is truth. Science is neither of the East nor of the West. She is universal and for all time. The Bengalee will no more be anglicised by reading chemistry, logic, or jurisprudence in the English language than an Englishman will be Romanised by reading the *Principia* or *Novum Organum* in Latin. False ideas pervert the mind, true ideas instruct and develop the mind, no matter in what language the ideas may be conveyed to the mind. Science does not bear the impress of nationality; Art does. The acquisition of Science by a Bengali through any one of the European languages will not Europeanise him; though it is true, as has been previously shown, that the acquisition by a Bengali of the Art of writing or speaking English, will cast his mind in an English mould. Science is universal, but all literature is not;



and it is possible that natives of India by cultivating English literature do imbibe English ideas. That is not a result, however, which needs be dreaded. No Englishman declines to read Latin or Greek, French or German, on the ground that his reading will denationalise him. The larger a man's fund of ideas, the better for him. Exclusiveness in intellectual life, as in social, begets narrow views, a stunted individuality. Individuals and nations always improve by contact with types of civilisation, modes of thought, and forms of expression, different from their own. The people of India have been ruined by isolation. And to withdraw from them the influences of English education is to take away the one chance they have got of letting in extraneous light upon the dense mass of insular prejudices hardened through ages. The immemorial prohibition of the Hindu to cross *Kālāpāni* (the black waters of the sea) has sealed his doom,—has effected his political extinction and left him an intellectual *roué*. He stands in need of contact, social and intellectual, with other races; and if, as the necessary result of reading English literature, he does get anglicised, so much the better for him. Krieto Das Pal was anglicised; indeed he was one of the most anglicised Bengalis that have been known. It is customary to speak of those men as anglicised who eat English food, put on English costumes and, generally speaking, whose habits of external life are English. After all, substance is more important than form. The really anglicised man is he who has got English ideas, like the idea of civil

liberty, the idea that life is real, the idea of self-help, the idea of active duty, and who has got English *habits*, like the habits of organisation, of energetic action, of punctuality, of obedience, of kind treatment of subordinates. It is curious to observe that some of our countrymen who are really anglicised, charge others as being anglicised who have none of the distinctive qualities of Englishmen and are only pale shadows of the English dandy. Many men fail to see that for a Bengali to be anglicised, in the proper sense of the word, is not a crime, but a matter of credit. A compound of the Bengali character and English would be, altogether, a very desirable product.

It is just as well to remember, when the protest is made against Hindus being anglicised, that they have already been Mahomedanised by a prolonged Mahomedan regime. The ideas of society and politics which non-anglicised Hindus possess, are, as a rule, not Hindu ideas but Mahomedan ideas. Persian and Urdu words have been incorporated with the Bengali language; the Mahomedan costume is considered the proper costume for a Hindu appearing in a *Durbar*, a court of law, an office, or a public meeting; the ideas entertained by a Hindu who is not anglicised, of woman's position in the home and in society, are Mahomedan and not Hindu ideas; and, generally speaking, the ideas of despotism on the one hand and slavishness on the other, in almost all departments of life, though not unknown to ancient Hindu society, are, in the main, a survival of Mahomedan ideas and institu-

tions. It is necessary also to remember that so far as men have been anglicised at all, the anglicising agency has been not only, nor mainly, English education, but a certain moral atmosphere which the English have brought with them into India and which is penetrated with the spirit of the times. Anglicised, in a good sense as well as in a bad sense, many men are, who have not received English education but who could not help breathing in the atmosphere about them. Imitation and the unconscious absorption of surrounding influences must take place and alter Hindu ideas and habits. And some change must take place in the ordinary course of events, simply because time advances. Even if the English had introduced no education into India, the people of India could not have remained as they were in the days of Manu or in the days of the Mogul emperors. They would have changed, and they would have changed in the direction in which they have actually changed, though they might not have changed as much as they have. Nothing would keep the people in the condition of the "good old days," though English education should be swept away and the English themselves should retire from India. Times change, and we change with them: this is a principle which is overlooked by men who view English education as the one great innovating agent in India. Every time that a Hindu idea or institution perishes or changes, it will be foolish to shriek: "English Education is the cause of this disaster." Change is not always a disaster, nor English Education the only

cause of change. It is true that English education has sometimes developed a spirit of iconoclasm ; but destruction is not always an evil, for it does not always lead to a disturbance of order. Destruction of erroneous *ideas* will cause no breach of order, unless it is followed by a sudden revolution in *practice* ; and there are cases where the cessation of an injurious practice may not lead even to a temporary convulsion of social life. In all such cases, destruction is justifiable. A noxious practice or a wrong idea invites destruction, which may be stayed if it leads to disorder, but which becomes a duty when it averts more mischief than it brings. Destruction is the necessary preliminary of construction, or rather of re-construction ; and lovers of construction will get no opportunity until the hand of the destroyer has done its work. Sometimes, after destruction has been accomplished by voluntary effort, the necessary reconstruction has come about spontaneously, that is by the operation of the inherent forces of society. And it is worthy of note as matter of history that constructive geniuses have often appeared after some great work of destruction, as if they had been called into existence by it. Many a constructive mind remains dormant until the necessity of construction, occasioned by previous destruction, elicits its energies.

Education, however, is received not only from books but from life. A reorganisation of the political life of India will educate her sons in a way such as books never can. Teaching acts directly upon the intellect

and not upon habits of action ; and of necessity its results will always be confined to a few. A whole nation cannot be sent to school. Powers of action are best developed by action ; and the activity of political life stimulates the energies of the nation, instead of merely putting ideas into the heads of a few. Kristo Das Pal believed in the educating power of political life. His own life was dedicated to politics. He not only demanded political reform with a view to the exaltation of the intellect, the character and the condition of the people, but by his vigilant, penetrating and persistent criticism of political measures, himself educated the people. Not only ideas determine political life, but political life evokes ideas ; and there can be no doubt that the active exercise of political rights and discharge of political duties, will prove to be a regenerating influence of a deeper and more pervasive character than almost any other, among a people whose memories do not cluster round any great historic deeds, or any great national literature, and whose religion has come to be identified with a scheme of contemplative inaction. X“ Everywhere it will be found that politics form the main education of a people. And what do they teach ? The whole people are now invited to assist in the councils of their statesmen. They are free to discuss whatever concerns the government of the State,—religion, political science, history, the laws, the social condition of the people and the diplomacy of foreign powers. How wide a range do these questions embrace, in the whole field of

human knowledge! Who can fail to be enlightened by the study of them? And political studies surpass all others in the interest they excite, and the earnestness with which they are pursued. They form part of the daily life and conversation of the citizens of a free State. Books may be laid aside or read with languid inattention: but the stirring interest of public affairs arrests the thoughts, and stimulates the faculties of the most inert. Freedom is the best of national schoolmasters." \* India has need of this best of national schoolmasters. The time has gone by when the highest duty of the Government wholly consisted in imparting European science and literature to a select class. The country has developed immensely since Lord William Bentinck's day; her demands are greater; her aptitude for progress is greater. An expanded policy has become necessary to meet the new demands. The pedagogue with his grammar and his lexicon, his atlas and his Euclid, his blow-pipe and his test-tube, has yet work enough to do. But he will not reach the people, nor reorganise life. The people must receive their new birth not by Ideas alone, but by Action; and Industrial activity, Military discipline and Local Self-Government must now supplement the influences of English education.

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\* Sir Erskine May's *Democracy In Europe*, Vol. I., li.

## CHAPTER X.

### CONCLUSION.

The life of Kristo Das Pal teaches a mournful rather than a hopeful lesson. It tells us how little can be obtained by a native of India, however great,—how little in the way of recognition by the Government or the people. The “success” and the “distinction” which have been spoken of in preceding chapters are only relative; and the words are justifiable only in a conventional sense. Kristo Das Pal was more successful and distinguished than natives of India generally are, but he had nothing like the position and power which he could have attained if he had been an English civilian. And yet there can be no doubt that his capacity and his services to the state were of a higher order than those of half-a-dozen ordinary civilians put together. To quote Mr. Routledge again: “He ought to have had more power, a still higher position. ‘We English,’ Carlyle wrote, ‘find a poet, as brave a man as has been made for a hundred years or so, anywhere under the sun. . . . . We, taking due counsel of it, set the man to gauge ale-barrels in the Burgh of Dumfries; and pique ourselves on our patronage of genius.’ These words very slightly altered might apply to Kristo Das Pal. There was no reason in himself why he should not have been Finance Minister or Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

He had no crotchets or theories, but was eminently practical. His mastery of detail was acknowledged. His clearness of expression was remarkable, both as a speaker and writer. He was no opponent of the British Government, but its friend and supporter in all good things. There was nothing of the 'Irreconcilable' in his nature. In fact he was a Statesman. Yet after all he only gauged ideas for an India Office which sits in London, and we 'pique ourselves on our patronage of genius.' This may do for a time, but it will not do perpetually. One man like Kristo Das Pal is of greater permanent value than all our Civil Service, able as are many of the men whom it includes. In this brave and loyal Hindoo gentleman—loyal in every act and relation of life—England has lost a powerful friend. It would become her well, and would be to her high interest, to preserve his memory in some method of every day life. In another sense, deeper and more stable than any dynasty or raj, his name will remain beloved by the land that bore him; revered by all men who can revere true worth."

Kristo Das Pal was really a statesman; and his statesmanship had none of that "tainted and equivocal" character which, Mr. Bright has justly observed, has become common in our day. But with all his political aptitude he had no political career open to him; he had no opportunity of real political work. He was only a sort of consulting officer to the Government of Bengal and the Government of India; of real legislative or executive authority he had none. In consultation and



by criticism he rendered services of immense worth, which were never acknowledged, and, under the existing law, probably could not be acknowledged, by his appointment to a position of power and responsibility. He was fit to be a Finance Minister, but instead of being permitted to originate a financial policy and to carry it out, he was only given the privilege of criticising a financial policy inaugurated by English officials. He was fit to be a legislator; but he was permitted not to originate laws, but only to criticise them. His criticisms have, no doubt, largely shaped the course of legislation and administration, but he never attained the position to which his claims were established not by mere reputation, not simply by the voice of the people, not by success in academic life, but by the most substantial and unerring of all tests—actual performance. His criticisms showed his capacity for construction; but though he was allowed to criticise, he was never allowed to give effect to his constructions. His whole life is a mournful spectacle of talent, energy and feeling, suppressed, cramped and curtailed by the institutions of the land he was born in. A pinioned eagle or a lion in chains he may be said to have been, from first to last. "The rulers, so to say, sneaked to him for advice, without granting him the opportunity to carry out his policy . . . . He remained a critic to the last—a man of suggestion oftentimes—an interpreter or adviser at best; never a doer, in the ordinary sense. Bred up in neglected native journalism, he managed to escape the doom of a free lance, but

he never attained his just position . . . . . A palm in the Arctic Zone, he would have languished in disappointment but for his native buoyancy. The appropriate soil for his genius was a parliamentary latitude. In England he might have been a Gladstone—in the United States an Arthur.\* In India he could get no higher offer than that of the Vice-Chairmanship of the Calcutta Municipality and that of a Deputy Magistracy, both of which he had the good sense to decline. His highest honour, namely an Additional Membership of the Legislative Council of India, did not come to him in the natural course of events, but sprang from accidents,—the generosity of a Viceroy, the sensible action of an Association, and the existence of a Legislative Bill. A few high appointments which a generous Viceroy or Lieutenant-Governor may confer upon deserving natives of India should not inspire the conviction that a fair field is open to indigenous talent.

Kristo Das Pal felt keenly the disadvantages attached to Indian nationality; and, whenever the just demands of a native of India were overlooked, cried out from the depths of his heart, "crime of colour!" So long as the people of this country are habitually described, with coolness and deliberation, as 'those horrid natives' and as 'niggers,'† so long as legislative measures intended to place Indians and Englishmen

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\* *Reis & Bayyet*, 9th August, 1884.

† See Mr. Cotton's *New India*, p. 37.

equally under the jurisdiction, civil and criminal, of courts presided over by natives of India, are nicknamed 'Black Acts' by Anglo-Indians, it will be difficult to avoid the belief that the Anglo-Indian sets store by his complexion and has a repugnance to the skin of his Indian fellow-subject. English laws are just and English policy is noble. But laws and policy are abstractions. They are general principles which have received expression in Proclamations and Statutes. When they come to be interpreted, and applied to real life, they appear, very often, stamped with the permanent infirmities of human nature and, in particular, with the arrogance of power. A Royal Proclamation obliterates, so to say, the distinctions of creed, color and caste. Parliamentary statutes also assert equality; and the English law attaches no disability to the "complexion burnt upon a man by the Indian sun." But an English statesman spoke of the people of India as its "coloured millions," and offered no apology for arguing thus in the House of Lords: "'You must get rid of these race distinctions,' said the noble Earl. My lords, that is a very fine popular phrase. It may be very fitting for popular use; but does the noble earl get rid of these race distinctions? He laid it down as an inexorable principle that no person was to be excluded from office on account of his race—that no person was to be prevented from holding any appointment for any reason except unfitness. But are these the principles on which the Government of India is to be conducted?" Another statesman observed in a despatch: "The difficulty,

indeed the utter impossibility, of getting European Officers of position and education to serve cheerfully in subordination to Natives of India, is one which, whatever may be thought of it from an abstract point of view, no one with personal experience of India will under-estimate. So long as natives can obtain admission to the Covenanted service by competition, this difficulty will be liable to arise, and the only complete remedy would be to close the Competitive Service by law to natives of this country [India].” Macaulay, for his attempts to establish equality, was attacked by the Anglo-Indian press for eighteen months “with a breadth and ferocity of calumny such as few public men, in any age and country, have ever endured; and none, perhaps, have ever forgiven.”\* In the press and on the platform he was treated to filthy abuse and was threatened with personal violence. When Lord Ripon and Mr. Ilbert sought to equalise the jurisdiction of English and Indian magistrates, and the rights of English and Indian accused persons, they were treated very much in the same way as Macaulay. And now, when the people of this country seek that unreserved competition should be the means of recruiting the public service, and that natives of India should compete *on equal terms* with Englishmen for admission into the Covenanted Civil Service, there are not wanting men who profess to view the demand with horror and who

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\* G. O. Trevelyan's *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, Vol I.  
p. 391. See pp. 389-400.

openly press the claims of race, religion and nationality.

It is precisely because English law and English policy are not invariably carried out in a rigorous and consistent way, that there is room for agitation. Kristo Das Pal devoted his life to agitation, and other educated natives of India are endeavouring to follow in his footsteps. These men are thoroughly loyal. They are full of veneration for the English nation and for English principles. They know that they have obtained their charters,—a number of statutes, and the Proclamation of 1858; and their agitation, which is always temperate and constitutional, is directed to securing the faithful observance, in practical life, of the terms of those charters. There are hardly any new principles to fight for. Let the principles already asserted receive practical application in the details of life and be carried out to their full logical consequences. Let distinctions of race and creed never be recognised by English statesmen vested with authority, and let no reference be made to the complexion of the native of India.

Kristo Das Pal's political attitude was one of unswerving loyalty to the English Power and of regard for the rights of the Indian people. Those rights are certainly not in conflict with those of the dominant Power; and nothing but insanity would make a native of this country impatient of English rule. It is possible for Englishmen, official or non-official, acting individually or collectively, to be high-handed and self-assertive, and when they are resisted on lawful grounds by public criticism, the resistance must not be mistaken

for disaffection. Hurrish Chunder Mukerjea in raising his voice against the oppression of ryots by indigo planters did not exhibit disloyalty ; nor did Kristo Das Pal when he attacked "Personal Government" in Bengal, in 1873 ; when he defended in warm language the rights of emigrating coolies, in 1881—82 ; or when he condemned the final settlement of the Ilbert Bill as bringing "Peace with Dishonour." Kristo Das Pal approved of the policy of the "Black Acts"—which, from a moral point of view, ought to be called Bright Acts,—strongly supported 'competition' as against 'nomination,' as a method of selecting candidates for offices, insisted on the equality of Her Majesty's subjects, of whatever race, creed or complexion, and protested against all language and action calculated to wound feelings, or to create distinctions not founded on intellect and character. He sharply criticised proceedings which tended to the failure of justice ; he mercilessly exposed dishonest, deliberate deviations from the law, and the social tyranny of the official or the planter. And he did his work of criticism with uniform fairness, not sparing his own countrymen and bearing no ill-will to Europeans.

If the people are little consulted in questions of legislation and internal administration, they are still less consulted in questions of diplomacy and foreign politics. Wars are declared and conducted in entire ignorance of the views of the people ; and yet the people are made liable for the cost of the wars. If there are two items of expenditure which are most

strongly objected to by educated natives of India, they are 1° Home Charges, 2° The cost of wars which England undertakes, but which do not benefit India. Kristo Das Pal objected, throughout his life, to India being saddled with these expenses. England cannot in her own case brook the idea of taxation without representation, but in India she has established and tolerated not only taxation without representation, but taxation for objects which have no concern with the country. The people of India, however, have more confidence in the Parliament than in the executive, and, next to having a representative assembly of their own, would like to entrust her interests to the English House of Commons. Under the law, the consent of Parliament has to be taken for defraying out of the Indian treasury the expenses of military operations carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian possessions. But with reference to certain recent military operations, Parliament held that "consent" did not necessarily mean prior consent. This is a construction which, as Mr. Gladstone observed, would "convict the Parliament of 1858 and those who had to do with the law then, of the crime\* of political idiocy." And it is a construction under which, as Mr. Gladstone also observed, Parliament would have no control over wars which could be made by the Indian army. Mr. Gladstone formulated the principle as follows: "It is quite evident that the general sense of our administrative system is that India is to pay for what is called a *bona fide* Indian war. I perfectly

understand the contention that if a party in this country is prepared to challenge radically the justice or propriety of a war, then a case may be raised for the purpose of arguing that it ought not to be borne by India, which cannot be heard upon the question, but by the superior powers of this country." Who is to judge if a particular war is a *bona fide* Indian war? And when? And how long must India continue not to be heard upon a question which affects her vitally? Even a Kristo Das Pal must go without rights and privileges which as a British subject he feels to be inherent in himself. And yet we talk of his political life! It is sorry politics, after all, to be able to do nothing but pick holes in Legislative Bills, Official Reports and Government Resolutions! As a member of the Bengal Legislative Council, Kristo Das Pal believed that he had a right to put questions to the Lieutenant-Governor, and he had to be reminded by a Secretary that he had no such right. The Prime Minister of England may be asked questions in the House of Commons; but a Lieutenant-Governor must not be badgered.

If Kristo Das Pal received little from the Government, he received less from the people. A good deal of patriotism exists in the country; but it is of the abstract sort. Small is the number of Bengalis who feel for other Bengalis in the same way as Englishmen feel for Englishmen, or Frenchmen for Frenchmen. The sense of nationality is wanting; the European conception of Duty is wanting. In the highest classes the



feeling of jealousy is the most predominant. As previously observed, men of education, position and distinction are intensely jealous of each other. The elevation of a Bengali will cause more heart-burning among Bengalis than among Englishmen. His own countrymen will speak ill of him, put every obstacle in his way, write anonymous letters about him, intrigue against him. If he gets any remuneration for his work, his benevolent compatriots will offer cheaper terms. The more worthy he is, the keener jealousy he will excite, for a stupid man will expose himself and accomplish his own ruin, but the intelligent man will shed lustre on his position. The appointment of Kristo Das Pal as a Justice of the Peace and as a member of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation "caused jealousy and heart-burnings in many a quarter."\* There would have been no jealousy and heart-burning if anybody other than a worthy young Bengali had been appointed. The English Government and the English people with all their faults have done something in India to remove misery and reward merit. It is chiefly for them that the flower of Indian talent does not waste its sweetness in the desert air. The people of the country are sickened by the sweetness and would crush the flower as a thing poisonous. Kristo Das Pal was not deceived by the crowd which assembled in his house every day, and knew that he had very few friends. He knew

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\* *The Life of Babu Kristo Das Pal.* By Ram Gopal Sanyal.  
p. 120.

also that there were few men who would help and encourage genius. On one occasion he seemed to single out Pundit Ishwar Chunder Vidyasagar as "that generous friend of struggling merit."\* And it must be remembered that he spoke from very large experience. As regards the people proper, the masses, they have it not in their power to raise any man to greatness. Even if Kristo Das Pal had all the abilities of Mr. Gladstone, and had done his work, he could never have been People's Kristo Das. Living or dead, Kristo Das Pal received very inadequate recognition from his enlightened countrymen. During his lifetime his social influence was only the result of his official position, and now that he is dead, one cannot fail to be struck by the very much larger support which the European community has given to the movement to perpetuate his memory, than that which his countrymen have thought fit to give.

The worker in India has not only to be content with poor recognition from the Government and the people, but has to fight the powers of nature. The Bengali in particular, finds the physical conditions of life altogether inimical. A more enervating and disagreeable climate than that of the plains of Bengal there has probably never been. Artificial drainage has somewhat improved the character of the country; but there is no controlling natural agencies like the sun, rain and wind. Existence has to be undergone in the midst

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\* In the *Hindoo Patriot* of June 30, 1873.

of an atmosphere which is steam. One blessed with a large measure of native energy may live ; but the conditions of life make mental work unusually exhausting, physical exercise disagreeable, sound and refreshing sleep impossible, and languor chronic. By careful habits men may live to a good old age ; but the most important conditions of a long life seem to be the absence of sustained, intellectual work, and frequent retirement to salubrious climates. Kristo Das Pal died at an age at which an English statesman might be almost at the commencement of his active political career. It is interesting to observe that he was born when Mr. Gladstone was probably preparing his work on Church and State and had established himself as a "young man of unblemished character and distinguished parliamentary talents." And he died when Mr. Gladstone had not yet commenced his agitation for Irish home-rule. This is the relation, in point of mere length of time, of a great Indian career to that of a great English career.

It was said of the Swedish Chemist, Bergman, that he had made many discoveries, but his greatest was the discovery of Scheele ; and Dr. Bain has observed of James Mill that his greatest contribution to human progress was his son, whom he educated to be his fellow-worker and successor. In the same way it may be said that the greatest work which Hurrish Chunder Mukerjya left behind him was Kristo Das Pal, who only maintained the traditions, developed the teaching, and continued the work of his predecessor and master.

Unfortunately, Kristo Das Pal has left no such human piece of work. A week after his death, Sir Ashley Eden wrote: "His loss to Bengal will be irreparable, for I know of no man who can aspire to take his place as a thoughtful, moderate, earnest advocate of native rights. . . . I can only hope that as a Kristo Das was found to wear the mantle of Hurrish Chuuder, some one may be found to take the place of Kristo Das, but I doubt it." Bengal has yet given no promise of another Kristo Das, of a political worker who would combine in himself some of the most admirable characteristics of the Englishman and the Bengali, who would be at once loyal and critical, at once progressive and reverential, at once keen and comprehensive. The work of Kristo Das it would be difficult to sum up. "No calculus can integrate the innumerable little pulses of knowledge and of thought that he has made to vibrate in the minds of his generation." Work which consists mainly in influence,—influence upon the Government, influence upon the people, influence upon conceptions of the good, the true and the just,—is work which never thrusts itself on the eyes of men, precisely because it is subtle and pervading. Of men who do this kind of work it may truly be said: *Si monumentum queris, circumspice*. Looking deeper, one may discover even some material results of the labours of Kristo Das Pal. The volumes of the *Hindu Patriot* edited by him will remain, for all time, an indispensable study to the political worker in India, constructive or critical. They are the best material

for a history of India, a faithful and not a coloured history of India, for the period which they cover. The two best modern historians that India has had, are Hurrish Chunder Mukerjea and Kristo Das Pal; and theirs is a history, not taken at second hand and distorted by the official pen, but a true portraiture of life. If the people of Bengal rightly valued the work of Kristo Das, they would be anxious to construct his statues by the dozen and place them in every school and in every office; in the market-place, the court, and the council chamber. The artist would probably find it hard work, for as Mr. Routledge says: "I do not think it would be easy to convey in canvas or on stone even the most noticeable features of his character. I have a photograph which gives admirably one phase of that character—his saucy independence, his ever-ready manly defiance. But another phase certainly is not less important—that of the kindly sympathies, the great forbearance, the well-spring of affection which endeared him to all who knew him. If any artist could unite the two, India might have the pride and glory of pointing her youth to her First Great Tribune." The artist might be found; but the character of the nation will not be changed in a day. The memory of Ram Mohun Roy has been preserved in Bristol; of Dwarka Nath Mitter, in London. The country of their birth has done little or nothing to commemorate them; whether it will do anything substantial to cherish the memory of Kristo Das Pal is as yet uncertain. But Kristo Das Pal expected no material

reward from posterity, and if his shade still lingers round his loved haunts in Bengal, it will certainly not be disturbed by the apathy of his countrymen. He was destined for high work, and he did all the work that came before him, in the most honest way and to the best of his power, without a groan, without a sigh. If his lot was cast in a country where the dominant spirit is that of an alien bureaucracy, where there is no free trade in intellect, where the people are inert and lost to a sense of public duty, where intellectual workers are prematurely killed by the withering influences of nature, it was a misfortune for which there could be no help.

If Kristo Das Pal worked so much, deserved so well, and got so little, smaller men will get much less and learn to be content with what they get. Pessimism will be the most acceptable philosophy in this unlucky country; and Gray's 'Elegy' the song most welcome. But despondency is unmanly, and inaction a crime; therefore, sons of India must not complain and be idle, but toil. However perilous and cheerless the journey of life, life's duties must be done. In darkness and in storm, on the raging waves and under bursting clouds, let each man do his work and leave the rest to destiny. A life like that of Kristo Das Pal will serve as a beacon light. Sorrow has its lessons, its triumphs and its joys. Kristo Das Pal had his schooling in sorrow. He who 'with tears has eaten his bread' and through the 'long-drawn midnight hours sat weeping on his lonely bed,' has realised

the solemnity of life, the earnestness of duty and, ultimately, the sense of victory, in a way which the pampered child of luxury can never so much as imagine. The sorrows and the triumphs of a worthy life have here been hastily sketched; and, alike in its sufferings and its doings, its failures and its achievements, it teaches lessons and presents a model which the people of India and all who seek their welfare would do well to study.

## APPENDIX.

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### IDEALS OF GREATNESS.\*

The discussions that have followed the death of some of our eminent countrymen and the commemorative meetings that have been held, are suggestive of a crowd of reflections. They not only remind us how evanescent is human greatness, but how insensibly the human race is changing its ideal of greatness and how much of accident enters into the making of great men. Amid the heat and bustle of modern life, it is well now and again to reflect calmly on the conditions of real greatness,—on greatness as it was understood in ancient times and as it is understood now, on the means by which it was attained then and the means by which it is attained now. Scientific training is said to produce humility. In the exercise of that humility we find it convenient to assume that we are superior to the ancients, not only in knowledge but in intellect, not only in intellectual power but in moral goodness, not only in moral goodness but in religious fervour. There is no doubt that in intellect, morals as well as in religion, we are better disciplined than the ancients; we have more of regulated power. But the question we want to raise, is one concerning not power but sincerity.\* It is a problem not easily solved, if by exchanging the simplicity of ancient life for the artificialities of modern life we have made a clear gain. Artificialities are incident to

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\* This article has been made up by piecing together two <sup>†</sup>articles which appeared in the *Indian Nation* newspaper, namely, one on *Ideals of Greatness* (June 2, 1884) and the other on *Indian Civilization,—Old and New* (November 24, 1884), both written by me. Portions of both the articles have been excised.—N. N. G.



civilisation ; and superiority of organisation means increased complexity of structure. But if artificialities are every thing and nature nothing, if the internal is merged in the external, if the substance fades into the shadow, if organisation becomes its own end, and if increasing complexity of structure leads to a progressive incapacity of discharging its natural function, we are not sure, as we have said already, that we make a very clear gain. We believe firmly in the law of progress ; and nothing that we have said ought to produce the impression that we view the course of the world as one of progressive deterioration, an uninterrupted decline from bad to worse. The course is generally one of progress, but there never is and cannot be equable progress of all that is good and worth cultivating in the heart and mind of man. The progress of the discursive faculty is attained at the expense of the imagination. The progress of science means the decline of poetry. The industrial arts and the fine arts do not progress with equal speed at the same time. The art of printing, coming more and more into use, throws into the background the art of speaking. The activity of a commercial life is incompatible with the calm of a retired speculative life. The emphatic assertion of self is incompatible with patient resignation. Development of individuality can only be attained by refusing to merge one's existence in that of the family or the body politic. And a too eager concern in the goods of this world is hardly to be expected in a mind truly religious.

These observations have fairly brought us to the point of this article. The men that we admire at the present day are great in their way, but they do not represent the types of greatness most admired in ancient times. The ideal has changed. It has changed for the better in some respects, for the worse in some others. The political, the social and the intellectual ideals of modern times, represent a higher degree of perfection than those recognised by the ancients ; the moral and religious ideals of the ancients far surpassed the fetishes

we worship to-day. The political ideals are higher, because with them is associated a greater amount of liberty. Modern political organisations are good or bad precisely in so far as they are or are not based on liberal principles. Despotism or unrestrained authority would by common consent be recognised as the worst form of government. The political functionary who wants to be worshipped as a hero will certainly not endeavour to outrage the sentiments of the people but rather shout with the mob. A much larger measure of liberty is expected and granted in well governed modern states than would have been dreamt of in ancient Greece or Rome. The huge machinery of self-government in England is the result of ideas and habits and aspirations much in advance of those of the ancients; historically, of course, it is the necessary result slowly evolved out of the ancient forms of Government. Even so it is with modern social arrangements. In political as well as in social arrangements liberty is the great ideal. Thinkers like Mill regret the tyranny which the society exercises over the individual; and it is a long time yet before the individual is allowed that liberty which is his due, and which it is one of his highest duties to claim and to assert. But we are speaking not of the facts of modern society but of the ideals of it. The great ideal is liberty; and the efforts of thinkers and workers are directed to the attainment of that great end. In the sphere of the intellect also we have made a distinct advance upon the ancients. The ancient intellect was in the main imaginative; the modern intellect is in the main practical. The ancient intellect was speculative, the modern is observant. Ancient methods of reasoning were in the main deductive; modern methods are, on all suitable occasions, inductive. Not poetry but science, not mere beauty but utility, not theoretical perfection, but practical efficiency are the ends we aspire to.

In spite of this superiority and probably in consequence of it, we are inferior to the ancients in other respects. Science teaches us facts and their relations. We come to be acquainted

with the realm of law,—law not in the sense of command but in the sense of an invariable sequence. Coming to know and to reason upon facts as they are, we acquire a tendency to ignore facts as they ought to be. If men in all ages and all countries are found as a matter of fact to have acted in a certain way, the action is presumed to be right. The gospel that is preached is the gospel of force, and the rights of the strong are believed in because they are exercised. Facts are their own justification. Because the weakest go to the wall, they ought to go to the wall. This is the view which is maintained, sometimes openly, sometimes under disguise, by various historians and moral and political philosophers. It was John Stuart Mill who observed in his essay on Bentham that an action has three aspects, the moral, the æsthetic and the sympathetic. Looking at the moral side of it, we say if it is right or wrong, and this we do by the exercise of our reason. The moral aspect may, therefore, be otherwise called the intellectual or rationalistic aspect. The best of us do actions which are only right, and neither beautiful nor lovable. Ancient history abounds in instances of heroic self-sacrifice and tender devotion, not always demanded by allegiance to duty, which are extremely rare in modern history. But it is in religion that the ideal has changed most of all, and for the worse. The conditions of modern life are such that wealth and rank are indispensable to attract general admiration. In ordinary cases the conditions may be fulfilled without doing violence to our ideas of propriety. But to expect of a religious teacher that he must be rich before he can be respected is surely contrary to all notions of the fitness of things. In India especially, wealth is the supreme object of adoration, precisely because poverty is the most pervading evil. The soldier or the statesman who may command worship in other countries, will excite languid interest here.

In India, European civilisation has come in contact with a civilisation which has to some extent been fused with Oriental civilisation.

Roughly speaking, materiality is the distinctive feature of European civilisation, and spirituality of Eastern. What has been the result of the conflux? One would have expected that each would supply the deficiencies of the other, and that Europeans who had imbibed the spirit of Eastern civilisation, and Indians who had thoroughly assimilated the distinctive products of the West, would alike be perfect types of humanity, possessing everything that was good in two differing types of civilisation. It has not been so, and probably it could not be so, if there was any material analogy between the laws of social growth and those of animal life. As a matter of fact, the European and the Indian have each lost something and gained something, and it is difficult to say whether in the long run either of them has been a gainer. The old ideal of life seems to have faded from the view as well of the Englishman as of the Indian. In religious earnestness and in strength and dignity of character there has been a decline. The age of martyrs is gone,—once and for ever. “That of sophisters, economists and calculators, has succeeded.” The brave men of old may have died in defence of causes which did not deserve their sacrifice; but if they died in defence of their honest convictions they deserve to be honoured for all time. An honest man, proud in his poverty, pursuing in his loneliness his unappreciated work with a single-minded devotion to truth, defying pressure and persecution, is a spectacle of glory than which nothing nobler could be vouchsafed to human eyes to see. We have probably seen the last of such spectacles, at any rate in this country. To seek nothing but wealth, to do worship to power, to practise dissimulation whenever expedient, is to act in a manner repugnant to the spirit of the true Hindoo life of old, although there may be the most rigid adherence to the rules of the Hindoo religion in the transactions of domestic and social life. Plain living and high thinking, an ambition to live honestly and openly, a contempt for mean and selfish objects,—these have been the characteristics of the best types of ancient

Hindoo life, as indeed of ancient Greek life and Roman life also. The spirituality, the loftiness of our life, has been our great pride; the entire absence of materiality has brought us down to a low political level. We are afraid there are symptoms of modern European materiality working into our society, depriving us of some of our noble traits and yet not imparting to us the distinctive graces or utilities of European life. European ideas and habits of co-operation and organisation, of the dignity of labour, of the value of individuality, of self-government and its necessary conditions, honesty and obedience,—all these have yet to produce their full fruit. In the meantime, people have learnt from England that money is the great thing for which life is worth living, that tenderness is unmanly, and that a cold, reserved disposition is the most amiable feature in a man. If social laws will not produce, let us endeavour by voluntary effort to produce something between extreme spirituality and extreme materiality, for it seems that we have lost something very valuable of the one and have made no corresponding gain in the other. The East and the West will alike be gainers by the discovery of the golden mean; and if some homogeneous product could be evolved from all that is best in Eastern ideas and Western, India would be found to be the chosen home of a perfect civilisation in modern times.











